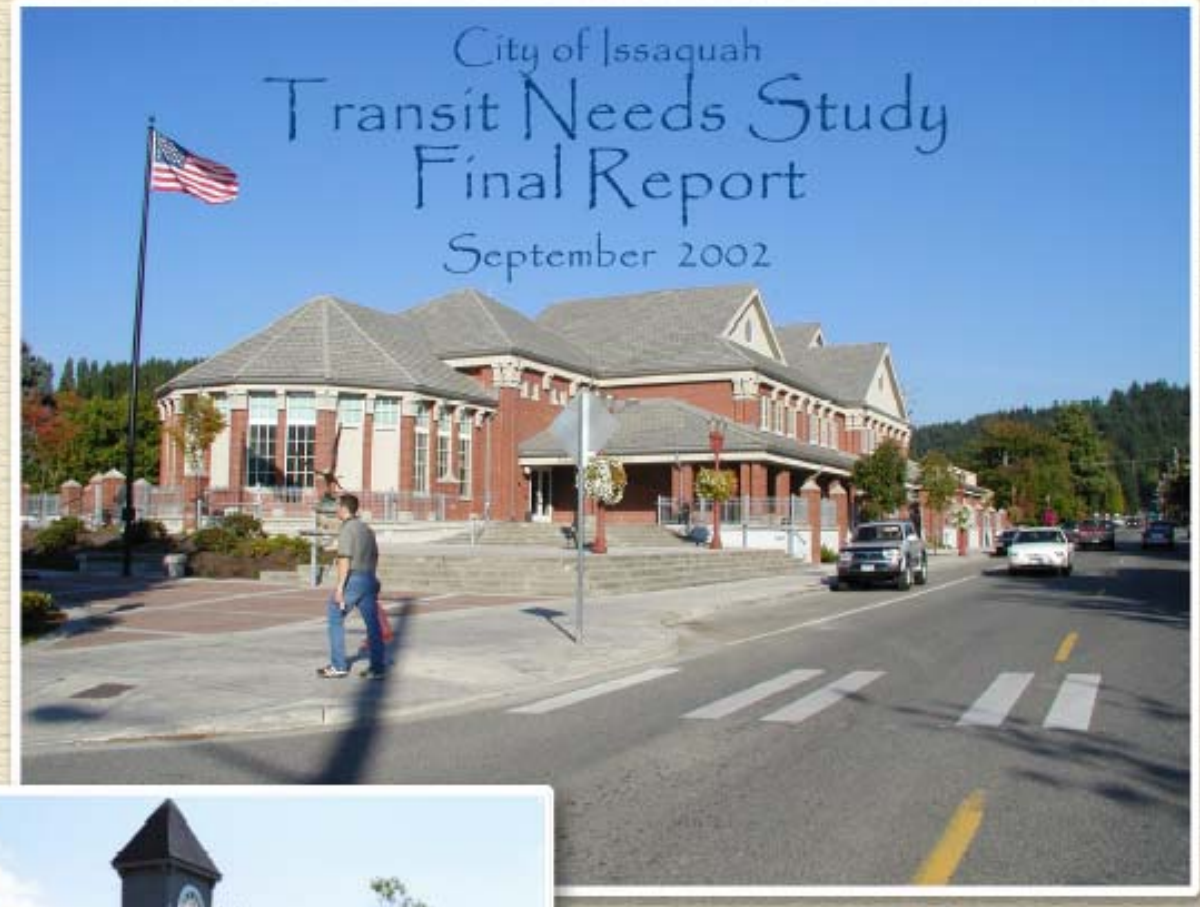
City of Issaquah

Transit Needs Study Final Report

September 2002



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Issaquah Transit needs Study

Project Report of Findings

Prepared for

The City of Issaquah, Washington

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September, 2002

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Executive Summary

The City of Issaquah, in an effort to quantify public transportation needs within the City, retained Perteet Engineering, Inc. to conduct the Issaquah Transit Needs Study. The focus of the study was to evaluate the public transportation services provided to the City of Issaquah by King County Metro Transit and Sound Transit and to identify any un-met transit needs affecting segments of the greater Issaquah community.

The conduct of this project is very timely, for the City of Issaquah sits at a crossroads. During significant portions of the day, SR 900, Front Street, and East Lake Sammamish Road are severely congested by local and pass-through traffic. Traffic on local roadways is limiting growth within the City of Issaquah as concurrency limits are being exceeded, and a building moratorium exists for much of the City. Several major roadway improvement projects are either in the planning stage or under construction. The SPAR, connecting the Issaquah Highlands development with Interstate-90, is currently under construction and expected to open in 2003. Planning studies for the widening of SR 900 and for construction of the Southeast Bypass are underway. Both the SR 900 and Southeast Bypass projects represent efforts to reduce the congested Front Street and SR 900 corridors.

Project Methodology

The project was initially divided into five major tasks, each containing a number of component sub-tasks. The major project tasks included the following:

- Evaluation of current market conditions
- Market segmentation analysis - an analysis of markets and sub-markets for transit services
- Documentation of transit service priorities and accessibility
- Route segment analysis - a comprehensive profile of each route in the Issaquah study area
- Identification of transit facility needs including park and ride facilities, transfer facilities and passenger shelters
- Identification of service changes to serve existing and future transit markets
- Evaluation of service governance issues – looking at the legal basis for King County Metro's provision of services to the City of Issaquah and the ability of the City of Issaquah to supplement services provided by King County Metro.

Study Findings

Transit services were found to require augmentation in a number of functional areas, including the following categories.

Services

The need for improved internal circulation within the City of Issaquah was identified, including the provision of services to the urban village developments of Issaquah Highlands and Talus, improved access between the retail areas north of Interstate 90 and downtown Issaquah, "lifeline" services to southwest Issaquah and improved local access to park and ride facilities.

Transit Facilities

Park and Ride

Park-and-ride capacity needs to be augmented in the Issaquah area. The current Issaquah park-and-ride is at capacity by 8 AM most days and the overflow Tibbets Creek facility is also at capacity.

Planned facilities at Issaquah Highlands and Sammamish, and the expansion of the Eastgate Park-and-Ride may provide some relief to overcrowded conditions at the Issaquah Park-and-Ride but there is a high likelihood that unmet demand for additional park-and-ride spaces may fill these facilities shortly after their opening without providing much relief elsewhere.

Transit Center

The site selection process for a new Issaquah Transit Center is already under way. A number of potential sites are being evaluated for the location of this facility. It is likely that there will be some support for locating this facility at or adjacent to the existing Issaquah Park-and-Ride facility. While this location certainly is located at the confluence of a number of King County Metro and Sound Transit routes, the existing park-and-ride facility currently provides transit center functions at this location.

Passenger Shelters

There are just eight passenger shelters in the City of Issaquah, including two at the Issaquah Park and Ride lot. Since riders and non-riders unfailingly list passenger shelters as extremely important to their decision to ride transit in surveys, the current inventory of passenger shelters needs to be expanded.

Marketing

There is inadequate dissemination of transit information within the City of Issaquah. Many citizens are unaware of existing services. Transit information is not always readily available in the community and marketing of services to non-riders is currently inadequate.

Study Recommendations

Based upon the findings of this study, a number of recommendations have been made in a number of functional areas. These recommendations are briefly summarized below.

Service

Service recommendations were made for a number of sub-regions within the City of Issaquah. In general, those recommendations focused upon improving the internal transit circulation within the City, of improving the connections between the retail and commercial developments north if Interstate 90 and downtown Issaquah, providing service to the two major urban village developments in the Issaquah Highlands and Talus and providing lifeline transit services is areas currently having no transit services.

Service recommendations are summarized in Table i.

Service Area	Route	Description	Span	Change in Annual Cost	Addresses Transit Priority # Focus group (P. 16-17)	Change in Vehicle Requirements (peak)
Klahanie/Sammamish Plateau	927	Extend service until 7:00 PM weekdays and add service from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM Sundays	6:00 AM to 7:00 PM weekdays 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM Saturdays and Sundays	$ 52,000	3, 4, 12	0
Southwest Issaquah	New	Implement new demand response service.	6:00 AM to 7:00 PM weekdays only	$ 205,000	2, 12	+1
Issaquah Highlands	200	Operate loop via E Lk. Sammamish Pkwy. to downtown Issaquah (short term)	6:00 AM to 7:00 PM weekdays only	$ 149,000	2, 3, 4, 12	+1
	200	Extend loop via Black Nugget, SPAR and Interstate-90 to downtown Issaquah (longer-term)	6:00 AM to 7:00 PM weekdays	$ 149,000	3, 4	+1
	200	Add loop service via Black Nugget, SPAR and Interstate-90 to downtown Issaquah on Saturdays (longer-term)	7:00 AM to 7:00 PM Saturdays	$ 164,000	3, 4	0
Talus	214	Move several 214 trips originating in downtown Issaquah to Talus	6:00 AM to 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM weekdays	$ -	12	0
	209	Extend from Issaquah Park-and-Ride to Talus	9:30 AM to 7:30 PM weekdays and Saturdays	$ -	12	0

Table i
Summary of Issaquah Service Recommendations

Facilities

In addition to the recommended changes in transit service, the evaluation of transit facilities summarized has suggested the need for additional passenger facilities in the City of Issaquah to support the recommended service modifications.

Park and Ride Facilities

It is recommended that King County Metro and Sound Transit work together to identify a location for another park-and-ride facility, located to serve the greater Issaquah community, that will provide additional capacity for intending users.

The planned Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride is planned for an initial capacity of approximately 500 stalls, but has an ultimate design capacity of close to 1,000 stalls. Currently, there are commitments to construct only the 500 stalls in the first phase of development.

It is recommended that this facility be closely monitored and that plans be made for the timely expansion of the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride as soon as demand demonstrates the need for additional capacity.

Transit Center

It is recommended that the City of Issaquah carefully evaluate the potential benefits of locating the proposed transit center in or near the Issaquah CBD. This location is already the nexus of transit service in the City and sits at the crossroads of a number of existing transit routes: 200, 209, 214, 269 and 927.

Because of the crowded traffic conditions along Front Street in this area, the promotion of increased used of public transit is in the best interests of the City of Issaquah and its citizens. The Issaquah Transit Center, located in the neighborhood of downtown Issaquah, can be a very powerful and visible marketing tool to attract new transit riders.

Passenger Shelters

Passenger shelters may be constructed in concert with King County Metro's own passenger shelter program. However, criteria for locating those shelters is based almost entirely upon average daily boardings at candidate bus stops. In this, the City of Issaquah will be in competition with other jurisdictions throughout King County for the limited number of shelters sited each year.

It is recommended that the City investigate embarking upon its own program of locating shelters at strategic bus stops throughout the City, much as the City of Bellevue did as part of the widening of Northeast 8th Street several years ago. Such a program will involve locating shelters based upon different criteria.

High Ridership Stops

Shelters should be located at all bus stops exhibiting 20 or more daily boardings. Based upon the ridership criteria, three additional shelters should be sited at the following locations:

1 Northbound on Front Street at 170 Front Street North (33 daily boardings)
2 Southbound on 12th Avenue NW at Newport Way NW (30 daily boardings)
3 Eastbound on NW Maple Street at 12th Avenue NW (20 daily boardings)

Stops with a Higher Potential for Ridership

A number of other locations, which currently do not meet the ridership threshold for passenger shelter location are located adjacent to major employers or other trip attractors and should generate a much higher level of daily transit boardings than at present. The location of shelters at the following locations will provide a highly visible reminder of the availability of transit service and should promote higher use of transit services:

1 Adjacent to, and across the street from, the Village Theater on Front Street
2 At Front Street and Alder Place
3 At Front Street and Sunset Way, east of the Issaquah Library
4 At Issaquah City Hall, westbound on Sunset Way
5 On Black Nugget Road immediately north of Issaquah-Fall City Road
6 Westbound on SE 51st Street just west of East Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, adjacent to the entrance to the Siemens Company facility (See ***Figure 22***)
7 At SE 51st Street and 220th Avenue SE adjacent to Sammamish Park Place
8 On 220th Avenue SE adjacent to the District Court building
9 Eastbound and westbound on 10th Avenue NW adjacent to Costco and the Pickering Farms Barn

10 On Lake Drive adjacent to Costco store (there appears to be insufficient space to locate a shelter adjacent to the Costco Headquarters Building)
11 On 12th Avenue NW at across from Issaquah City Hall Northwest
12 At the corner of SR 900 and Gilman Boulevard NW (no bus stop exists currently at this location)
13 On Newport Way adjacent to the King County Library Center (no bus stops exist next to this location in either direction, despite the fact that more than 250 persons are employed at this site (see Table C, page 11.)
14 On Gilman Boulevard and 7th Avenue NW

Significant effort should be made to locate a bus stop and shelter adjacent to the Costco Headquarters Building as a means of promoting additional transit use at this location. This location would probably require placing the shelter and pad on private property set back from, and adjacent to, the existing sidewalk. Such placement would require the approval of Costco corporate management.

The Issaquah City Hall on Sunset Way is built out to the street, such that there is little room to locate a street side shelter at this location. If the City wishes to position itself as a promoter of increased transit ridership, development of a passenger shelter at this location would be a significant step in demonstrating that commitment. Currently no bus stop exists on Sunset adjacent to City Hall, although there is curb parking at this location that could be rededicated to transit use. A stop and shelter are located across Sunset Way from City Hall.

Marketing

It is recommended that the City of Issaquah take a more aggressive position in marketing available transit services to its citizens.

The City should actively pursue means to help develop public/private partnerships with major employers and retailers to promote bus ridership and to identify additional incentives for landowners and developers to provide transit-related facilities in their developments.

It is recommended that the City investigate the production of a City of Issaquah Transit map, similar to the one prepared by the City of Bellevue, which shows all of the transit services available within the City, irrespective of the system providing that service. Such a publication could also list all monthly pass outlets, fare schedules, major points of interest and the routes that serve them and transit information numbers and web addresses.

Working with the two transit agencies, information kiosks should be located at additional locations throughout the City, providing information on route alignments, schedules, fare structure and schedules. Outlets for monthly passes and system maps should also be established within the City and in the absence of other locations, monthly passes should be made available at the two City Hall locations.

Chapter 1
Overview and Methodology

The City of Issaquah desires to examine the provision of public transit service provided to, and within, the City by both King County Metro Transit, the local and sub-regional service provider, and by Sound Transit, the regional transit provider. This examination has been carried out by Perteet Engineering, Inc., Everett, Washington, with the assistance of Entranco Engineers and Carolyn Browne Associates, both of Bellevue, Washington.

1.1 Project Design and Methodology

The project was initially divided into five major tasks, each containing a number of component sub-tasks. The major project tasks were the following:

1.1.1 Task 1: Identification of the Existing Transit Market

The effort began with a number of activities designed to identify the transit market(s) being served in the City of Issaquah by existing transit operations.

1.1.1.1 Evaluation of Current Market Conditions

The first task included the evaluation of current market conditions by examining available population, employment and traffic measurements and projections and by identifying and locating activities and facilities that are significant generators of transit trip demand.

1.1.1.2 Market Segmentation Analysis

A further examination of the market segments being served by public transportation in the City of Issaquah was undertaken by conducting a small group discussion with a sample of Issaquah citizens to determine their public transit knowledge, experiences and opinions. Group participants covered a wide spectrum of citizens and included both transit riders and non-riders.

1.1.1.3 Technical Memorandum #1

A short technical memorandum, summarizing the findings of Task 1, was prepared for review and comment by the City of Issaquah.

1.1.2 Task 2: Evaluation of Existing Transit Services

The second task determined the success with which existing public transit services meet the transportation needs of the identified market segments identified in Task 1.

1.1.2.1 Documentation of Service Priorities

This activity built on the outputs of the group discussion as well as the study team's observations of transit operations in the study area. The examination included a review of King County Metro service requests and complaints, an inventory of transit-related facilities in the study area, and an evaluation of existing route alignments and schedules.

From this examination was prepared a list of identified facility and service needs and opportunities, including route extensions, new routes, modified alignments, schedules and transfer times.

1.1.2.2 Analysis of Service Availability

An analysis of the availability of existing services to current and prospective riders was undertaken, including an evaluation of the following.

1.1.2.2.1 Service Area Coverage

GIS-based maps depicting the route alignments of the existing services available within the study area, based upon the information gathered by the project study team were produced. Service was differentiated by weekday peak, midday and evening service periods as well as Saturday and Sunday periods and Seattle-destined trips were differentiated from those destined for other locations.

Services to major local and sub-regional transit centers were analyzed in order to identify service needs based upon destinations served as well as sub-markets being served. This included an examination of trips requiring transfers as opposed to direct, one-seat trips. The proximity of transit service to those employers who are required to reduce commuter trips to their facilities, to civic facilities and to major retail centers as well as to major commuter parking facilities and services between neighborhoods within the study area was also determined.

1.1.2.2.2 Frequency of Service

The frequency of service currently available within the study area was documented and areas with low-frequency access to services were identified. These include routes with low off-peak frequencies vis-à-vis peak frequencies and those with service frequencies below 1.5 directional trips per hour. Such frequencies are generally considered to be inconvenient and unattractive for potential transit riders.

The spatial relationships of service frequencies were reviewed to identify gaps in the transit service network.

1.1.2.2.3 Span of Service

The span of services available within the study area was analyzed, with special focus on evening and weekend services as well as early-morning access to major employment areas. Areas in need of expanded hours of service were identified.

1.1.2.3 Route Segment Analysis

A comprehensive profile of each route in the Issaquah study area was prepared which identified the following:

- Description of the route
- Current route alignment
- Services levels in terms of revenue hours, miles, days and hours of service
- Service headways by time of day and day of week
- Average route length, running time and average speed
- Ridership activity by route, time of day and segment
- Total riders and ridership trends
- Rider complaints, commendations and comments from Metro customer contact files

This task utilized automatic passenger count data from King County Metro showing stop-level boardings and alightings by route for each route serving the study area.

1.1.2.4 Technical Memorandum #2

A second technical memorandum was prepared, evaluating service gaps in the existing Issaquah route network, focusing on the service coverage, frequency, span and travel times and containing route profiles for each Issaquah route.

1.1.3 Task 3: Identify Transit Facility Needs

An inventory of existing transit passenger facilities along existing transit routes was prepared. Such facilities included the following:

- Park and ride facilities
- Transfer facilities
- Passenger shelters

From the analysis of rider behavior, determined by the focus group, automatic passenger counter data and a review of past King County Metro on-board passenger survey data, needs for improved passenger amenities based upon current transit operations were identified.

The project team also identified future transit passenger facility needs based upon the modified routes and services developed in Task 5. Task findings were summarized in Technical Memorandum #3.

1.1.4 Task 4: Identify Future Transit Markets in the Study Area

The fourth task assessed the changes to the existing land uses and travel markets and their effects on future transit needs. The demand along major travel corridors affecting the City of Issaquah was assessed to determine how transit can best meet that demand. Population, employment and Eastside travel data were be reviewed to identify existing behavior within these corridors.
A key goal of the analysis was to assess future travel demand in terms of both current and emerging new corridors. Using the results of that assessment, a determination was made of the success of current transit operations in meeting that identified demand. Further growth is expected to occur as a result of the emerging employment activity in Issaquah Highlands, including a new Microsoft campus.

The examination of emerging corridors will provide direction for City of Issaquah participation in the service implementation process. If particular corridors are candidates for more intense transit coverage, traffic and roadway improvements will provide incentives for Metro to follow through. This sort of initiative can help influence the decision to implement transit service and capital improvements over the next several years. Examples of such initiatives include transit signal priority treatment and exclusive transit lanes along major street and highway transit corridors.

The consultant team also assisted the City in developing design standards for transit- and pedestrian-oriented streets along two corridors, NW Gilman Boulevard and Front Street in downtown Issaquah, balancing the need to promote vehicular traffic flow with the need to provide additional pedestrian amenities, including signalized crossings, within corridors projected to remain or become major transit arterials.

Technical Memorandum #4 summarized the findings of Task 4.

1.1.5 Task 5: Identify Service Changes to Serve Existing and Future Markets

Task 5 identified the ways in which scarce transit resources may be better allocated in the City of Issaquah — based on the City's stated goals and objectives.

1.1.5.1 Definition of Preferred Services

The project team identified proposed route service improvements for the Issaquah study area. This network was reviewed with the City to refine the preferred service concepts. The preferred service network is based on the six-year Transit Development Plan developed by King County Metro and Sound Transit's Service Implementation Plan. King County Metro staff participated in the review process with the project team and the City.

1.1.5.2 Identification of Recommended Route-Level Service Improvements

New service connections specified in this task describe the anticipated markets to be served and the operating and capital requirements associated with service implementation; including, round-trip route length, running time, estimated layover, cycle-time, headway, and fleet requirement calculations. In addition to identifying new market opportunities for transit, this task explored opportunities for improving the operation of existing services through schedule adjustments, alignment modifications, and service mode changes.

1.1.6 Task 6: Service Governance Issues

Task 6 investigated the legal basis for King County Metro's provision of services to the City of Issaquah and evaluated the ability of the City of Issaquah to supplement services provided by King County Metro. This examination included the following steps.

1.1.6.1 Legislative Review

This subtask included the identification and review of the existing legal and legislative provisions for public transit in Washington State including provision under which King County Metro has authority to establish and provide public transit service throughout King County.

1.1.6.2 Services to the City of Issaquah

An analysis of existing provisions of King County Metro transit service provided to the city of Issaquah and the levels of service that King County Metro transit is obligated or required to provide to the city were examined.

1.1.6.3 Legal Options

Legal and legislative options and/or remedies that may be available to the city of Issaquah for establishing local transit services were identified, including the ability to contract for transit service with other parties other than the county wide system.

1.1.6.4 Summary

A summary of findings was prepared, including options available through a combination of legal, legislative and service delineated efforts that support the city of Issaquah's efforts to manage and/or provide transit services.

1.2 Project Report Structure

This remainder of this project report follows, in general, the outline of project tasks summarized in Section 1.1. The major tasks are each summarized in a chapter which summarizes the task methodology, the data sources drawn upon and the findings and conclusions of the task activities. The organization of the remainder of this report is as follows:

Chapter 2: Identification of the existing transit market within the City of Issaquah, and an understanding of current market conditions that influence transit ridership in Issaquah.

Chapter 3: Analysis of existing transit services, including an identification and review of route productivity, analysis of past ridership trends, an analysis of transit performance and the identification of appropriate measures of service productivity, effectiveness and efficiency.

Chapter 4: Identification of current transit facility needs, such as shelters and benches, along existing routes. The discussion also includes suggested improvements to existing and planned roadways to enhance pedestrian and transit use.

Chapter 5: Recommendations for changes and additions to existing services, by both King County Metro and Sound Transit, to meet the needs and expectations of those future markets within the financial capacity of both organizations' East Sub-area financial plans. Chapter 5 also includes an identification of capital investments needed to support those services and recommendations for changes in City of Issaquah policies to support an enhanced transit- and pedestrian-friendly environment.

Appendix A: A discussion of the legal issues relative to the providing of supplemental public transit services within the City of Issaquah.

Appendix B: Small group discussion guide.

Chapter 2
The Existing Transit Market

This chapter summarizes the findings of the first task in the Issaquah Transit Needs Study. The first section summarizes the findings of the data review to identify existing operating conditions. The remainder summarizes the results of the group discussion held with project stakeholders to determine attitudes, awareness and transit needs in the City of Issaquah.

2.1 Existing Market Conditions

This section will briefly review economic conditions that define the Issaquah study area and which may influence the determination of transit needs to be defined in subsequent tasks.

2.1.1 Population Data

Based on April 2001 population data, the City of Issaquah currently includes 12,950 residents. Over the next twenty years, population growth is expected to average approximately 0.5 percent annually. The majority of this growth will be concentrated in two urban villages: Talus (formerly known as East Village) and Issaquah Highlands.

Issaquah Highlands is scheduled to complete 710 housing units in 2002, including 150 single-family units and 560 multi-family units. Build out is scheduled for completion in 2010 and will consist of 1,000 single family units, 2,250 multi-family units, 425,000 square feet of retail space and 3,450,000 square feet of office space. ***Table A*** summarizes the projected Issaquah Highlands growth from 2002 to 2010.

Year	Single Family (units)	Multi-Family (units)	Total Residential (units)	Retail (sf)	Office (sf)	Total Non-Residential (sf)
2002	150	560	710	2,200	0	2,200
2003	200	800	1,000	2,200	0	2,200
2004	280	1,120	1,400	52,200	500,000	552,200
2005	360	1,440	1,800	200,000	1,000,000	1,200,000
2006	520	1,680	2,200	300,000	1,500,000	1,800,000
2007	750	1,750	2,500	350,000	2,000,000	2,350,000
2008	880	1,920	2,800	400,000	2,500,000	2,900,000
2009	930	2,170	3,100	425,000	3,000,000	3,425,000
2010	1,000	2,250	3,250	425,000	*3,450,000	*3,875,000

Data Source: City of Issaquah

Table A
Projected Issaquah Highlands Growth, 2002 through 2010

Talus is scheduled to complete construction of 100 single-family units in 2000 and an additional 100 multi-family units. Office space is scheduled to begin construction in 2004 and retail space in 2006. Total build-out is scheduled for completion in 2009 at 450 single-family units, 1,285 multi-family units, 50,000 square feet of retail space and

800,000 square feet of office space. ***Table B*** summarizes the growth forecast for the Talus development.

Year	Single Family (units)	Multi-Family (units)	Total Residential (units)	Retail (sf)	Office (sf)	Total Non-Residential (sf)
2002	100	100	200	0	0	0
2003	160	260	420	0	0	0
2004	230	450	680	0	120,000	120,000
2005	300	700	1,000	0	200,000	200,000
2006	360	880	1,240	50,000	360,000	410,000
2007	400	1,100	1,500	50,000	600,000	650,000
2008	430	1,250	1,680	50,000	720,000	770,000
2009	450	1,285	1,735	50,000	800,000	850,000

Data Source: City of Issaquah

Table B
Talus Growth Forecast, 2002 through 2009

A third potential urban village development, in southeast Issaquah east of Issaquah High School and adjacent to the planned Southeast Bypass is not scheduled for development until late this decade.

2.1.2 Employment Data

According to a survey completed in 2000, approximately 14,000 jobs are located within the City of Issaquah. The City recently completed an employment capacity analysis, which concluded that an additional 19,000 jobs could be accommodated on the City's remaining developable land. Of these, 14,000 jobs are expected to occur in either Talus or the Issaquah Highlands. The remaining 5,000 jobs are projected to be spread throughout the remainder of the City.

2.1.3 Roadway Conditions

The City of Issaquah sits at a crossroads. Traffic from both the City of Sammamish to the north and Maple Valley to the south passes through the City of Issaquah on the way to and from interchanges at Interstate-90. During significant portions of the day, SR 900, Front Street, and East Lake Sammamish Road are severely congested by local and pass-through traffic. A major issue facing the City of Issaquah is the limited number and capacity of roadways connecting the areas to the north and south of Interstate-90.

Traffic on local roadways is limiting growth within the City of Issaquah. Concurrency limits are being exceeded, and a building moratorium exists for much of the City. Several major roadway improvement projects are either in the planning stage or under construction. The SPAR, connecting the Issaquah Highlands development with Interstate-90, is currently under construction and expected to open in 2003. Planning studies for the widening of SR 900 and for construction of the Southeast Bypass are underway. Both the SR 900 and Southeast Bypass projects represent efforts to reduce the congested Front Street and SR 900 corridors.

2.1.4 Existing Major Generators

Seven employers in Issaquah participate in the CTR (Commute Trip Reduction) program (Table C). These seven employers account for almost half of all employment in the City

of Issaquah. Each employer is served by at least one KC Metro bus route. None of the CTR employers charge employees for parking.

Generator	Employees	Location	Transit Routes
City of Issaquah City Hall NW	320	North of I-90/South of 56th	200, 927
Costco Wholesale World Headquarters	2,064	North of I-90/South of 56th	200, 927
The Boeing Company	200+	East Lake Sammamish Parkway	269, 927
King County Library System Public Service Center	252	Newport/east of Maple	269, 927
Microsoft Corporation Sammamish Park Place	3,087	North of 56th, by UPS	200, 217
Siemens Medical Systems Inc Ultrasound Group	416	North of 56th, by UPS	200, 217
Western Wireless Corporation Call Center	500	North of I-90/West of 56th	271

Table C
Issaquah Commute Trip Reduction Eligible Employers

Based on King County Metro data, major transit attractions within the City include the Issaquah Park-and-Ride, the intersection of Maple/Gilman, and downtown Issaquah at the intersections of Front and Andrews and at Front and Sunset. These attractions have the highest numbers of passenger boardings and alightings of all stops within the City.

2.1.5 Summary of Market Conditions

Over the past several decades, the City of Issaquah has evolved from a small bedroom community to a more robust, economically diverse environment. Both employment and population density are projected to continue trending upward. The City of Issaquah will continue to be a net importer of jobs, i.e., it is a net destination during commute hours.

As is typical of most suburban areas, major auto-oriented clusters dominate the retail landscape. In Issaquah, those retail clusters are centered around NW Gilman Boulevard to the south of Interstate-90 and around Lake Drive, on the north side of Interstate-90. Generally, housing is significantly removed from the retail clusters.

The City of Issaquah experiences severe traffic congestion, largely due to pass-through traffic from the Sammamish Plateau and Maple Valley. Vehicular congestion is exacerbated by the limited number of Interstate-90 crossing points within the City.

The City of Issaquah has matured from a transit market perspective. The Issaquah Park-and-Ride is at capacity, demonstrating a clear demand for transit service to Seattle. In addition, the local employment base has grown to the point that a dedicated reverse commute bus is available to major employers in north Issaquah (KC Metro Route 217).

While some future growth may be constrained by the congested Issaquah roadways, planned future development concentrates significant amounts of growth in urban villages, which, by design, should have a greater transit use propensity. However, the urban villages, Issaquah Highlands and Talus, are located at the periphery of the City and will challenge Issaquah's transportation infrastructure.

2.2 Group Discussion

In order to gain public input into the Transit Needs Study, a small group discussion was conducted with representatives of several Issaquah businesses and interested citizens on March 14, 2002.

2.2.1 Overview

Participants were selected from lists of names supplied by the City of Issaquah and by King County Metro. The persons invited to the discussion included several business and community leaders who wanted to share their ideas and opinions about public transit services. The group discussion was facilitated using a prepared discussion guide

The opinions expressed throughout this section are those of the discussion participants. It should also be noted that the comments reflect each person's perceptions of fact.

2.2.2 Summary of Discussion Themes

A number of recurring themes ran through the group discussion. These are summarized in the following sections.

2.2.2.1 Greatest Needs

The most dominant theme in the discussion was the need to focus on public transportation services within the City of Issaquah and between Issaquah and other Eastside destinations.

Within Issaquah, the Route 200 shuttle is not perceived to be providing needed service in several ways:

- Buses do not run often enough
- Service is not provided to/from some of the outlying neighborhoods
- Service is not provided to many of the commercial and retail areas north of I-90
- Many Issaquah residents do not know about the Route 200 shuttle or that this is a fare-free service

The discussion participants believe that there are many local public transportation service needs that should be addressed in this study:

- Service from the Plateau, and other nearby residential areas that do not currently have service, into Downtown Issaquah and to the commercial/retail areas north of I-90
- Development of another park-and-ride that will handle the current overflows and will be located more conveniently for many riders
- Service for children's after school activities

There were many commuter service needs identified, including:

- Service to other Eastside locations (current service is believed to be focused primarily on service between Issaquah and Seattle)
- More direct routes, reducing the need for riders to transfer
- Feeder service to the park-and-ride from the neighborhoods
- More carpool/vanpool programs between the major employers and employment centers in Issaquah and those areas where bus service is lacking or inefficient

2.2.2.2 Current Transit Users

The major population segments currently using transit in and out of the City of Issaquah include:

- Commuters
- Middle school students
- Senior citizens
- Lower paid workers
- People going in to Seattle to do business

2.2.2.3 Perceived Problems with the Current Transit System

- The Issaquah Park-and-Ride is over capacity, resulting in many commuters parking on the street or in commercial parking areas
- The Issaquah Park-and-Ride is not conveniently located for many people
- Bus routes are primarily based upon trips to and from Seattle; it is difficult to use transit to travel between Issaquah and other locations on the Eastside
- Little or no transit service is provided from many of the surrounding neighborhoods into Issaquah
- Many in the community are unaware of the Route 200 service (some do not know that there is a no-fare circulator bus operating in the community)

2.2.2.4 What is Working Well in the Current System

Group members agreed that overall the system Is working well in several ways:

- Buses are clean and drivers are friendly
- Existing express bus service is good
- Fares are reasonable
- Buses run on time

2.2.2.5 Bus Stops

For the existing routes, more bus stops are needed in the commercial area north of Interstate-90, and throughout Issaquah. More stops are needed in the neighborhoods where service currently exists, and in the neighborhoods to where service will be expanded.

The city will need to provide more rights-of-way to allow for bus pull-outs to permit safe bus access and to provide for passenger drop-off and pick-ups. Additional transit amenities are needed at bus stop locations, such as covered shelters and benches.

2.2.2.6 Marketing Public Transportation

A major problem with the current bus and vanpool programs is lack of public awareness. Many Issaquah residents lack knowledge concerning current services. As more service is added, it will be especially important to educate the public about available services and about how to use the system. The discussion participants had several ideas for promoting the use of buses and vanpools:

- Market the system in the neighborhoods where service currently exists
- Provide free Flex Passes to apartment residents
- Provide incentives for owners and developers to provide transit-related facilities (bus stops, rights-of-way, etc.)
- Develop more public/private partnerships to encourage bus ridership

- Advertise more and provide more information to educate the public about transit use

2.2.3 Summary of Discussion Comments

The following sections summarize the findings of the group discussion process.

2.2.3.1 The Participants

The nine participants included five men and four women, most of whom are directly associated with transportation issues. All but one were recruited with the help of the City of Issaquah; one person's name was provided by King County Metro (he had called to discuss transit service in Issaquah).

Name	Company/Interest
Hank M	Microsoft – employee transportation coordinator
Debbie B	Issaquah Press - publisher
Rowan H	Retired Mayor
Debbie J	King Co. Commute Trip Reduction
Joe F	Baima & Holberg,Inc./City Council member
Darrell S	Swanson Architects/Chamber board member
Christine M	Microsoft – runs commute program at Microsoft with Hank
Anders G	Resident of Issaquah/works in Downtown Seattle
Karen M	Costco – employee transportation manager

Table D
Group Discussion Participants

Only one person in the group is a regular bus rider and just two have ridden a bus in the past month.

2.2.3.2 The Current Bus System

A number of questions focused on identifying use of existing transit services.

2.2.3.2.1 Who rides the bus?

The group participants perceived that there are specific segments in the community currently riding buses. These include:

- Commuters going to work everyday
- Middle school students
- Senior citizens
- Lower paid workers (one person commented this is the group he sees a lot on the Route 200 bus)
- People going in to Seattle to do business

2.2.3.2.2 What is keeping people away from using the buses?

Presently, the bus system is not providing the convenience or service people require to use the bus instead of a private vehicle.

The park-and-ride is over-capacity. When people come to the park-and-ride and it is full, it is easier to continue driving on the freeway into Seattle. One person commented that he believes a park-and-ride is a very expensive proposition for the amount of cars it can take off the road; he believes park-and-rides are not a very cost-effective way to promote more bus ridership. The current park-and ride is also not providing good service for many because it's too far to walk to and from the bus.

Other themes included:

- King County Metro planning has been very "Seattle centric." It is assumed that people who live in Issaquah work in Seattle and own a car to drive to a park-and-ride.
- Climate has an impact on ridership because many people don't want to walk between a bus and work or home in the Northwest weather.
- There is poor north-south service on the Eastside. Trying to get to Redmond or Bellevue is very inconvenient (a 10-minute drive vs. a 50-minute bus ride). East-west service is OK.

2.2.3.2.3 What do you think is working well with the current bus system?

There are some good express services for those in Issaquah. For example, a commuter can travel between Everett and the Issaquah Park-and-Ride in 50 minutes. Several others in the group agreed that there are other express services that also serve Issaquah well.

Those who ride the buses say that the buses generally run on time.

A new Metro route from the Plateau to the major employment areas north of I-90 is attracting new riders who haven't been on buses before. They are finding it is a convenient way for them to get to work; and some have noted that, in some circumstances, it can take less time to take the bus than to drive to work.

The group agreed that there are several ways in which the bus system is working very well. The buses are clean and the drivers are friendly. Overall, it is a good transit system. There is good customer service, good lost and found services, people feel safe on the buses and the cost is reasonable.

2.2.3.3 Major Transit Needs

Participants were prompted to identify public transportation needs in the Issaquah region that are not being adequately met, at present.

2.2.3.3.1 Routes

There was considerable discussion about the "Need to focus on the different populations in Issaquah who need service, not just the commuters." Several also commented on the need to provide service that links the Plateau with other Issaquah neighborhoods, and with Downtown Issaquah and the Issaquah commercial and retail areas.

Group members had several suggestions for new routes, including:

- More north-south routes on the Eastside
- Local feeder service between the park-and-rides and neighborhoods and Issaquah shopping and employment areas; the current park-and-ride is a significant distance from commercial centers and from Interstate-90

- Service is needed to get people from south of Interstate-90 to the businesses and shopping areas north of Interstate-90
- The Issaquah neighborhoods need bus service to the business and commercial areas of Issaquah (people living on the hills need service to downtown Issaquah)
- One person described the "2000 kids in Little League who practice at 5 to 5:30 PM at least three or four days a week and need a way to get to the parks for practice;" someone else commented that Little Leagues are now providing the greatest source of "leisure" use of the buses according to a recent study
- Many children and others in the neighborhoods could use a circulator route to go to practices or to run household errands
- Shuttle service for Sammamish, similar to the one in Issaquah, could provide service to/from the Plateau to Issaquah
- After-school service is needed for middle and high school students who participate in activities (the current activity buses provided by the school district do not serve kids on the Plateau well)
- The 200 Route can be split into two shuttles for each side of the freeway
- Service needs to be more multi-centered, and less Seattle-centric. There was considerable discussion among the participants. One participant said that "80% of current and planned bus service begins and ends in Seattle; there's a real problem getting Sound Transit to serve the worksites on the Eastside." As an example, he pointed out that when Metro gave bus service to Sammamish, they gave them service to Downtown Seattle; money that could have been used to provide service to the Issaquah park-and-ride and more service between Issaquah and Seattle. (Note: Hank M commented that Microsoft surveys their employees every 6 months, and for the vast majority, their bus commute involves more than one bus; employees have said they would be willing to ride a slower bus and not be subject to the vagaries of connections and having to stand outside to wait for another bus)
- Develop more direct routes so people don't have to transfer as often; having to make transfers is one of the big drawbacks to using buses

2.2.3.3.2 Bus Stop Locations

There are currently few bus stops for commuters traveling to/from the employment centers west of SR-900. "We've added a lot of jobs and housing on the north side of Interstate-90 that we have not addressed with the 200 shuttle." It was also noted that people who work west of SR-900 can not get off the bus to go to their jobs. People cannot conveniently take a bus to the movie theaters, Costco, or any of the other major retailers in the area. Someone suggested, "It would be nice if there was an overpass from the area where Taco Time is to the retail areas on the other side of Interstate-90," but another person quickly responded, "Unfortunately, the only crossing that makes any sense comes out right in the middle of Costco's parking lot."

Other bus stop needs:

- More rights-of-way are needed for pull-outs for bus stops; space is needed for drop-offs and pick-ups at the bus stops
- Covered bus shelters
- More stops are needed in the residential areas, Newport Way and other places where new service is provided
- Stops are currently very far apart; they need to be closer together and more locations in general are needed
- More sidewalks are needed to help people walk to and from the bus stops.

2.2.3.3.3 Schedules/Frequency

The current service for Route 200 is every half hour and current service to Seattle is every half hour. Participants agreed that service should be more frequent to lure more riders.

Some of the suggestions from the group included:

- Improve headways to every 15 minutes for commute trips and for route 200 ("With service every 15 minutes, you almost don't need a schedule.") There was some concern about the expense of doing this, but it was agreed that the 15-minute frequencies would be just during peak travel times.
- Service to Squak Mountain only needs to be every hour or so during the day, but with more frequent service during peak hours. The service should be designed to match local needs.
- Route 200 will be utilized more if the frequency of service is increased, especially if better service is provided to and from the park-and-ride.

2.2.3.4 The Issaquah Park-and-Ride

The Issaquah park-and-ride is too successful. Every shopping center along the route has parking overflow from commuters unable to find parking spaces in the park-and-ride, and every bus stop in front of the shopping centers at 7 AM is full of riders.

Someone pointed out, "The park-and-ride is the closest thing we have to a transit center"

Mercer Island residents complain that a lot of commuters come to the Issaquah Park-and-Ride and can't find a space, so they go to Eastgate, and when they can't find a space at Eastgate, they go on to Mercer Island.

A lot of people park their cars on the street and board the bus before it gets to the park-and-ride, so they're guaranteed of having a seat on the bus. The Issaquah municipal lots are full.

However, with all of its popularity, the current Issaquah Park-and-Ride is not in a good location because it is too far away from commercial/retail areas. There was some discussion about a new park-and-ride location that is currently being evaluated, whether it should have capacity for 500 or 1,000 cars and whether it should be built now or in a few years.

Someone suggested that two churches on the south end of town might offer their lots as feeder service for the park-and-ride

2.2.3.5 Is the Free Downtown Shuttle a Good Use of Public Funds?

When the Downtown Shuttle was first mentioned, someone quickly pointed out, "It is fare-less, not free."

As the discussion evolved, one person in the group was surprised to learn that the Route 200 service is free. She said that many people don't know it. Another person commented, "The city has never marketed it from the day it was implemented."

There was some discussion about whether charging a minimal fare would provide enough additional funding to expand service. Someone else suggested pursuing other ways of paying for expanded service. Some noted that Issaquah lacks the density for a circulator bus to make sense from a cost standpoint.

However, when asked if the Route 200 is a good use of public funds, one person quickly commented, "In Issaquah, anything that gets a car off the road is seen as a benefit." But others suggested that the service does not really get cars off the road, and if people see empty buses, they get upset.

One person suggested that if the city is going to subsidize buses, it would make more sense to subsidize bus passes. It was pointed out that when the subsidy for Bellevue Community College was increased, twice as many people bought bus passes. BCC is now looking at providing more subsidized passes because they have 10,000 cars coming on campus everyday.

2.2.3.6 Who Pays for Transit Services?

It was suggested that the biggest issue concerning bus service for Issaquah is, "Who is going to do it?" Two primary questions were posed concerning this topic:

- Will Metro provide the needed local service for Issaquah, or will the City provide it's own local service?
- Will the needed new service be funded by Metro, or will the citizens pay for the local service themselves?

There was some discussion about whether the city can legally fund and take care of its own public transportation services. (For a detailed discussion of this issue, see ***Appendix A***.) Hank M commented that as an employer he would hope local public transportation would be done through Metro because Microsoft is providing Flex Passes to its employees, and they can get on any bus to get to and from work.

There was agreement that however the local bus system develops, it has got to be integrated.

Someone asked if the needs of the students are being considered, and it was pointed out that school boards usually have a representative that meets directly with the bus system. It was suggested that the current school bus system may be an opportunity for exploring ways in which the public bus system could supplant the school bus system. One participant noted that, "Kids ride Metro buses all the time in other cities."

2.2.3.7 Marketing/Transit Incentives

Group participants were strongly in favor of increasing the level of transit marketing, particularly using bus passes as incentives to attract new riders to the system.

Some of the marketing ideas suggested included:

- Having the city provide bus passes
- Providing one-time passes in city water bills
- Marketing bus service to major employers; encouraging employers in the area of a bus route to know about it and support bus use
- Marketing in the neighborhoods where there are bus stops, and educating citizens about using the system; encouraging people to try something once.
- Providing free Flex Passes in apartment areas as part of the lease agreement. This program is being tried in Downtown Redmond and Downtown Kirkland. Tenants in the buildings are given information about using the bus. The program is also being done in Bellevue, where people receive a bus pass with their apartment rental.
- Providing a fare-less system in Issaquah for a nominal cost. One person commented, "The Route 200 bus costs Metro over $5 a rider, " and suggested that it would be about the same cost for Issaquah to provide a fare-less system.

- Providing incentives for owners and developers to provide transit-related facilities, such as transit stops, rights-of-way and other incentives/disincentives. It was noted that some businesses are allotted a certain number of parking spots based upon employee transit incentives. The Microsoft campus is a good example of changes in urban planning. The original buildings were one and two-stories high, built away from 156th St.; now buildings are multi-storied and front right on the street.
- Public-private partnerships need to be addressed (for example, providing transportation between the different Microsoft buildings on public transportation with subsidy from Microsoft). Laidlaw currently runs a shuttle service for Microsoft, and it is a very expensive proposition. Hank M believes Microsoft would be open to a multi-user system. There is a liability problem with the public-private partnership, because right now Microsoft and other major employers providing their own shuttle transportation do not have the liability coverage to transport anyone except their own employees. There may be significant liability benefits to using a system provided by Metro or a city-owned system. Another person pointed out that Western Wireless (Voice Stream) is providing its own transportation for employees between Issaquah and Bellevue: "I think that every major employer in the area that has multiple campuses is providing its own shuttle services."
- Lower the number of employees from 100 to 50 required to qualify for Commute Trip Reduction requirements. Someone countered that this was being investigated, but the additional cost would be prohibitive. Kirkland has a TMP (Transportation Management Plan) ordinance that includes in the building permits regulations that mimic the TMP that does affect the smaller businesses in a business park. The TMP is usually managed by the city. However, one of the group members responded: "That may not apply to Issaquah because there are so many individually owned properties."
- Advertise more.

2.2.3.8 Prioritizing Transit Needs

During the discussion, lists were made of the many Ideas for Improving transit services for Issaquah. The participants were asked to select five Items that had the highest priority to them from the combined lists that were posted.

The items receiving the largest priority votes were:

1 Improve headways to 15 minutes for commute trips and route 200 during peak times (7)
2 Provide feeder service to and from the park-and-ride, and local service between the park-and-ride and shopping and work centers (improvements to the route 200 circulator) (7)
3 Offer more service within the Issaquah neighborhoods to the business areas of Issaquah (6)
4 Have shuttle service for the Sammamish Plateau to and from Issaquah (5)
5 Let the city and/or employers provide subsidized bus passes (4)
6 Develop rights-of-way for bus pull outs (4)
7 Provide incentives to developers and business owners for building transit stops, rights-of-way and other transit amenities (2)

8 Provide more places for commuters to get off the bus in the Pickering Place areas (west of SR-900) (2)
9 Have more north-south routes on the Eastside (2)
10 Provide service for middle and high school kids participating in after-school activities (1)
11 Focus on communities and cities in addition to Seattle (1)
12 Have service for the new neighborhoods (1)
13 Provide space for drop-offs near bus stops (1)
14 Advertise more (1)

2.2.3.9 Concluding comments

Each participant was asked, in turn," If you were in charge of how money and resources would be used to improve transit services for Issaquah, what would be your three top choices?"

Karen:

- Costco gives each employee $60 to use the money as they choose on alternative for getting to work besides traveling in their car; we have 600 people out of 2,362 who participate in the program using vanpools, walking, bicycles, etc. The vanpool program has worked for us. Buses are not efficient for many employees.
- Vanpool programs for those for whom buses do not work
- More stops and bus service for the Sammamish Plateau to businesses north of Interstate-90
- Support more employers providing incentives for employees who choose alternative methods for commuting to work

Christine:

- Shuttle service from the Sammamish Plateau to and from downtown Issaquah
- Route 200 service every 15 minutes during peak times
- Advertise more

Darryl:

- Have buses run more frequently
- Find right-of-way solutions
- More routes connecting Issaquah with other cities

Joe:

- Need a city-owned bus service
- Expand service to neighboring communities
- Provide subsidies for bus passes to employees

Debbie J:

- Obtain rights-of-way for bus stops
- Improve frequency of service
- Outreach to small employers, and market transit (educate)
- Promote Van share program (vans that are no longer being used by Metro are made available for a flat monthly rate to people who want to drive to the park-and-rides) to provide service from neighborhoods to park-and-rides

Rowan:

- Promote vanpools
- More service – improved headways and north-south routes
- Provide bus passes

Debbie B:

- Re-design route 200 to help reduce traffic in Issaquah
- Underpass is being considered for Interstate-90 to connect the areas north and south of the freeway; she believes it should not be a road, but should be just for the inner-city shuttle (would be an incentive for using route 200)
- Aggressive marketing and public awareness campaign for bus use

Hank:

- Integration of all of the public transportation services – many services are available that could tie together well
- Route 200 is very important to employers
- Public-private partnerships work as a good lever

Anders:

- Add service to Sammamish Plateau
- Improve frequency of service on Route 200 during peak hours
- Weekend service – traffic is worse on the weekend; Sunday is the worst

Chapter 3
Existing Transit Services

Chapter 3 summarizes the methodology and findings of Task 2 of the Issaquah Transit Needs Study, focusing on an evaluation of existing transit services. This evaluation is divided into three subsections:

1) Documentation of service priorities,
2) Analysis of service availability within the City of Issaquah and
3) Analysis of route ridership

3.1 Service Priorities

A number of sources have been tapped to identify rider service priorities. The small group discussions have been described in Chapter 2. A brief summary of service related comments from that activity is included below.

3.1.1 Small Group Discussion

Group discussion members felt that service needs to be more frequent. It was also felt that the route 200 does not serve all of the commercial areas to the north side of Interstate-90 adequately. The need for more marketing of all transit services was also mentioned with a particular emphasis on route 200.

To point out the need for better marketing, many group members cited the need for service from the Sammamish Plateau to downtown Issaquah and to the commercial areas to the north of Interstate-90. Although such service is currently provided by King County Metro Route 927, none of the group members seemed to be aware of it.

It was also felt that current service is mostly focused on service between Issaquah and Seattle, with little focus being placed on internal circulation within the Issaquah area. A major problem identified with existing services is the overcrowding of the Issaquah Park and Ride lot. Group participants cited the need for a new facility to provide additional parking capacity to relieve the overcrowding and the parking congestion created in areas adjacent to the Issaquah Park and Ride facility.

The opinion was stated concerning public transit's need to provide better service to school students participating in after-school activities. However, no specific ideas were described to meet this need.

Several suggested improved commuter services, including the need for more direct service to other Eastside communities to reduce the need for transferring, improved feeder services from the neighborhoods to the Park and Ride lot and an increase in carpool and vanpool services to local area employers.

3.1.2 Park and Ride Survey

A survey of park and ride users was conducted at the Issaquah Park and Ride facility by King County Metro. More than 77% of survey respondents use the facility five or more days a week. No one surveyed in this exercise reported using the facility fewer than three times per week.

Nearly 90% of users drive their own car and park at the lot. Only one percent of users reported accessing the facility via transit, even less than the 2% who reported walking to the facility. This finding suggests that the park and ride facility is doing little to reduce vehicular travel and congestion within the City.

Two thirds (67%) of facility users came from Issaquah. The next largest source of riders were Redmond (12%) and North Bend (6%.) Nearly all users came to the facility directly from home. 28% reported coming from Central Issaquah while 39% came from north of I-90 and 14% came from south of the City.

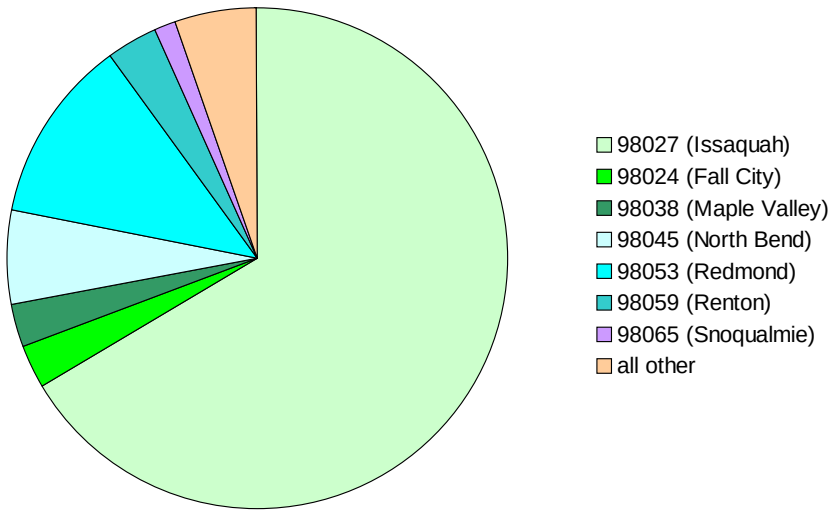


Figure 1
Zip Code Origins of Issaquah Park and Ride Users

More than one-fourth (26%) of facility users arrive at the lot before 6:30 AM and 54% before 7:00 AM. Only 5% reported arriving after 8:00 AM, reflecting the difficulty in finding parking space there at that time.

Eighty-five percent of users are there to catch a bus. Four percent use the lot for carpooling and 11% for vanpooling.

More than 96% reported using the facility on their way to work with nearly all the rest on their way to school. Very few use the facility for any other travel purpose, reflecting the small supply of parking available after 8 AM.

Three quarters of all users are headed for downtown Seattle. No other single destination was mentioned by more than 4% of respondents. Two thirds of all school-destined users are headed for the University of Washington.

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of all carpools operating from the Issaquah Park and ride lot contain at least four riders. Only nine percent have as few as two riders. Sixty-one percent of vanpools operating from the Issaquah Park-and-Ride facility consist of 12 or more riders. Only 19% contain less than eight.

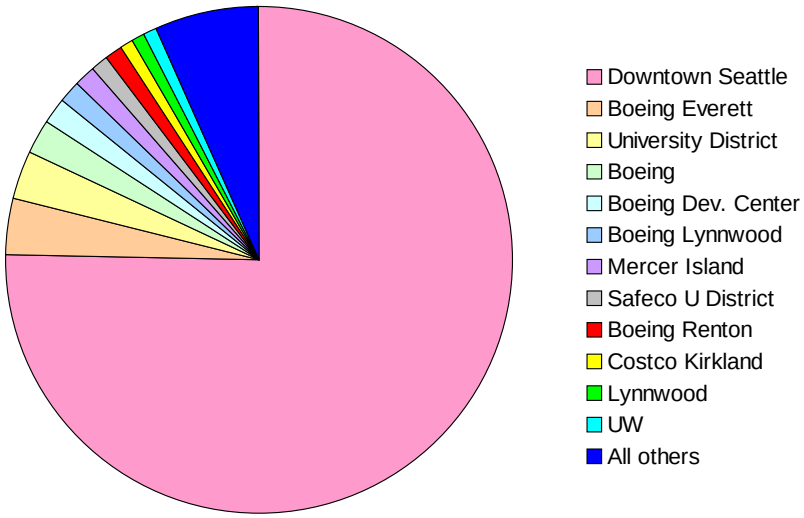


Figure 2
Work Locations of Issaquah Park-and-Ride Users

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of vanpool riders meet at the Issaquah Park-and-Ride lot. The rest are picked up at other locations.

Nearly three-fourths (73%) of survey respondents were in favor of expanding the Issaquah Park-and-Ride lot. Only four percent voiced opposition with the rest undecided. Of those who had previously been aware of expansion plans, 88% favored expansion.

About half (49%) of users do not use any other park and ride facility. Of those who sometimes use other lots, 75% mentioned South Bellevue and 12% mentioned Eastgate. About one in six (16%) uses another lot at least once per week. Two-thirds use another lot once a month or less. About 23% use other lots to catch up with a bus that has already left the Issaquah lot. Sixteen percent use other lots to catch buses that do not serve the Issaquah lot.

3.1.3 High School Survey

Students at Issaquah High School were surveyed concerning their transportation patterns. Nearly a thousand students responded to the questionnaire, although not all respondents answered every question.

Fifty-nine percent of survey respondents did not have a driver's license at the time of the survey. Only 4% walked to school. 31% drove to school in a car that remained at the school all day. Another 19% rode to school as a passenger and 29% arrived by school bus. Only about 2% rode a King County Metro bus to school. Approximately 15% of survey respondents rode to school with someone who did not remain at the school during the day.

More than sixty percent who drove to school cited some reason other than specific transportation needs requiring a car. 30% said they like the freedom of a car and 17% said riding the bus is not cool.

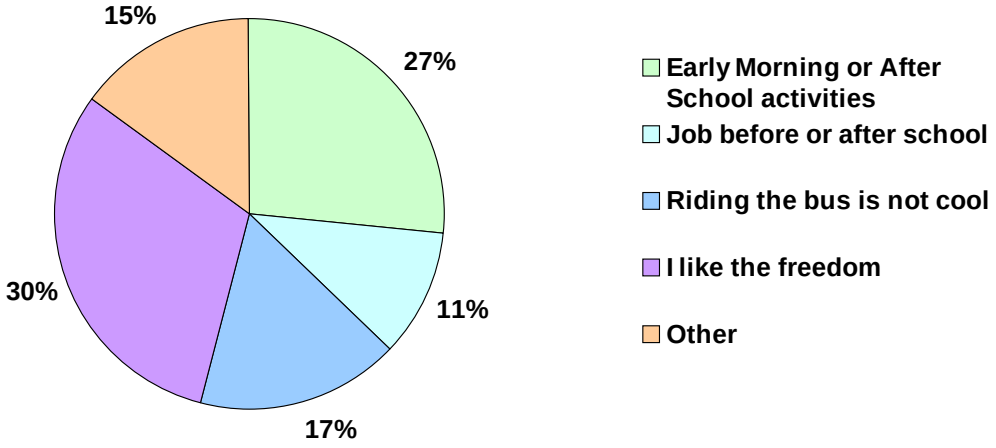


Figure 3
Reasons for Students' Not Riding Bus to School

When asked if they would use a student activity bus if it left from the high school instead of the middle school, about one-third (32%) answered in the affirmative. When asked about what time the activity bus should leave, a wide range of answers were given with eighty percent suggesting a time between 3:30 PM and 5:00 PM. Responses were split nearly evenly in half hour increments over this time period. About 31% of students said that the lack of transportation prevents them from taking part in after-school activities.

3.1.4 Metro Service Comments and Complaints

The log of Metro service complaints and comments for the routes serving Issaquah were reviewed to identify patterns describing those customer comments. The logs summarize comments from riders regarding a variety of subjects and cover the entirety of each route, not just the Issaquah portions.

Based upon complaint categories that are not personnel-related (speeding, discourteous driver, etc.), the most often voiced complaints and comments relate to off schedule operation (both early and late), being passed up on the street by the bus, the bus not showing up at all and operation off-route.

Requests for new routes comprised 4.5% of comments on the routes serving the City of Issaquah. Most of the new route requests did not pertain to operations within the City of Issaquah. Of those that did, most requested added service on existing routes rather the addition of new routes. Requests focused on additional service to the Issaquah Park-and-Ride in the morning, specifically on routes 200 and 269, for added service to the Sammamish Plateau and generally for later service on route 927.

3.2 Service Availability

The question of service availability involves several differing measures of service, including:

- Span of service
- Frequency of service

- Destinations served, and
- Spacing of routes

In general, bus service is not available in the hillside areas to the south and west of downtown Issaquah. The socio-economic character of this area, along with the topography of the hillside areas, makes this region an unpromising service area for public transit. Currently, no Metro or Sound Transit routes serve this area.

The core area for transit service in the City of Issaquah is the area bounded by Newport Way and Sunset Way on the south, by Interstate-90 and East Lake Sammamish Parkway on the east, by Sammamish Road/56th Street on the north and by SR 900 on the west. Access to most transit services is available to this area.

Four City analysis zones were defined to assist in the definition of underserved areas. They are:

- Zone 1: North of Interstate-90 west of East Lake Sammamish Parkway,
- Zone 2: North of Interstate-90 east of East Lake Sammamish Parkway,
- Zone 3: South of Interstate-90 west of Front Street, and
- Zone 4: South of Interstate-90 east of Front Street

Table E summarizes transit service accessibility in these four zones.

Route	Destinations	Peak	Midday	Evening	Saturday	Sunday	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4
200	Circulator	X	X				X		X	X
209	North Bend-Snoqualmie-Fall City-Preston	X	X	X	X				X	X
210	Seattle	X							X	
214	North Bend-Snoqualmie-Fall City-Preston-Seattle	X							X	X
216	Sammamish-Eastgate-Seattle	X					X	X		
217	Seattle-Eastgate (reverse commute)	X					X			
269	Overlake-Redmond-Sahalee-Pine Lake	X					X	X	X	X
271	Eastgate-Bellevue-University of Washington	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
554	Seattle-Eastgate	X	X	X	X	X			X	
555	Northgate-Bellevue-Eastgate	X							X	
927	Sammamish Plateau	X	X		X			X	X	X

Table E
Issaquah Service Availability

3.3 Rider Activity

Ridership data for the King County Metro routes serving the City of Issaquah have been provided by King County Metro. This data has been analyzed and is summarized in subsequent sections.

Figure 4: Transit Bus Stop Loading Volumes Map.

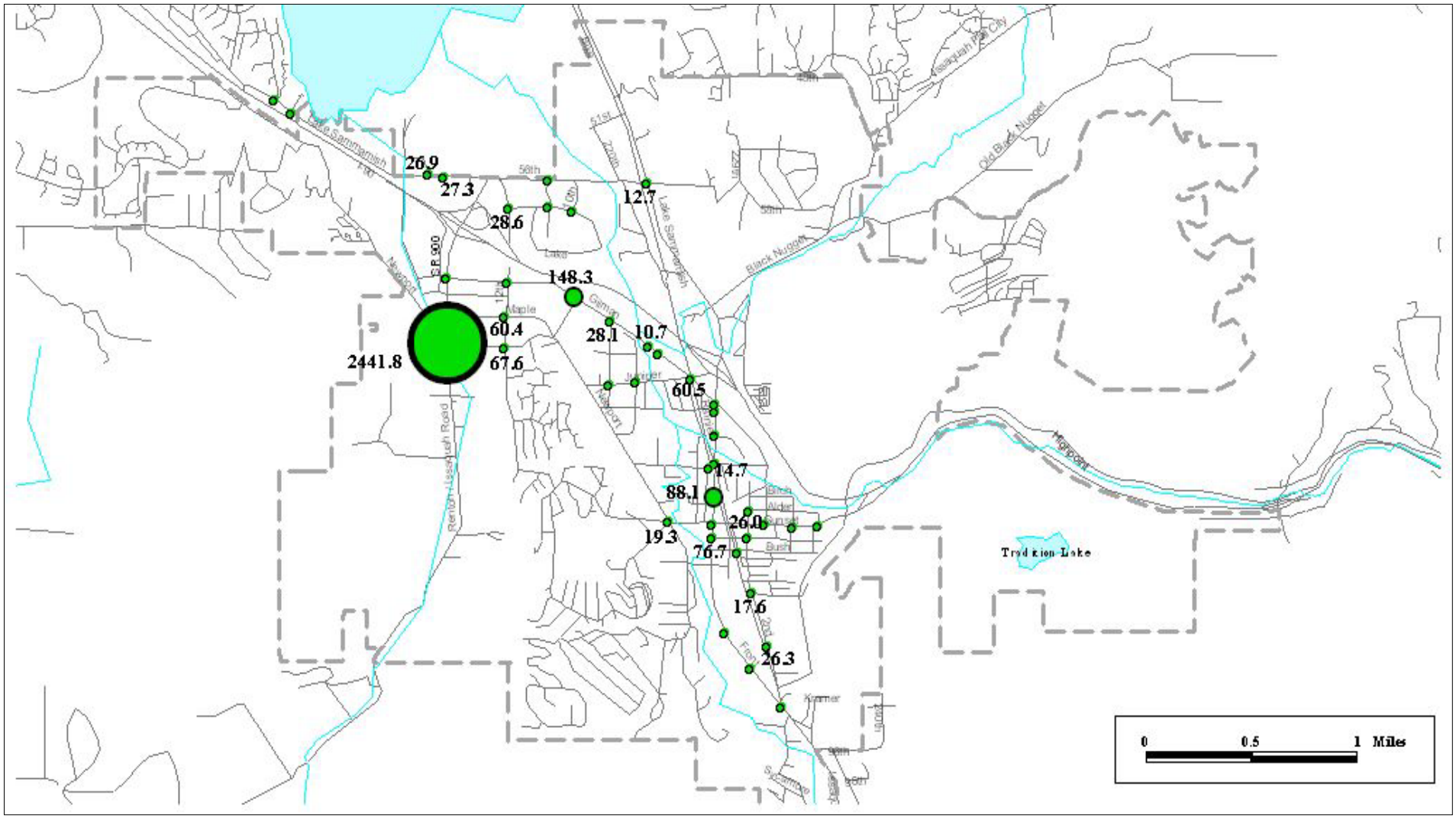
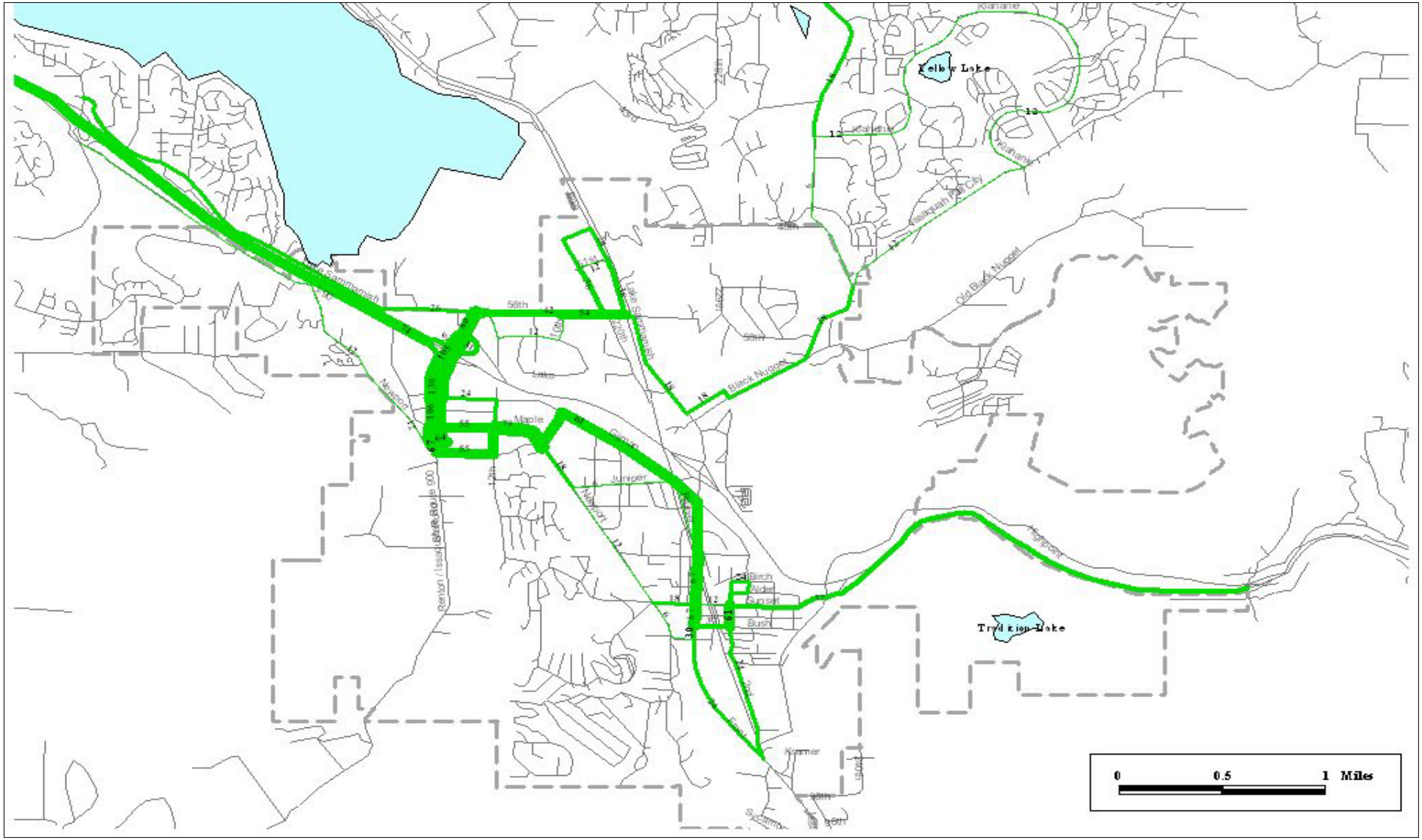


Figure 5: Issaquah Transit Volumes



3.3.1 Total Daily Ridership

Nine King County Metro routes and two Sound Transit routes serve the City of Issaquah. Based upon King County Metro passenger counts, average daily ridership on those seven routes is 5,598 unlinked passenger trips. Of that total, about 1,500 daily unlinked trips have one trip end within the City of Issaquah corporate limits.

3.3.2 Route Profiles

A number of the KCM routes serving the City of Issaquah have significant portions of their route alignments lying outside of the City. Only Route 200 lies entirely within the City of Issaquah.

		Total Riders		Issaquah		% of Total		
Route	**Dir.**	**On**	**Off**	**On**	**Off**	**On**	**Off**	**All**
200	NB	206	189	206	189	100%	100%	100%
	SB	140	103	140	103	100%	100%	100%
209	WB	31	35	4	19	13%	54%	35%
	EB	34	36	28	10	82%	28%	54%
210	WB	140	130	18	3	13%	2%	8%
	EB	116	119	2	1	2%	1%	1%
214	WB	673	642	587	35	87%	5%	47%
	EB	541	444	40	391	7%	88%	44%
269	NB	43	31	28	29	65%	94%	77%
	SB	13	14	0	7	0%	50%	26%
271	WB	1,153	1,119	169	4	15%	0%	8%
	EB	1,330	1,323	161	24	12%	2%	7%
554	WB	647	224	116	13	18%	6%	15%
	EB	101	607	17	198	17%	33%	30%
Total		**6,346**	**6,359**	**1,705**	**1,245**	**27%**	**20%**	**23%**

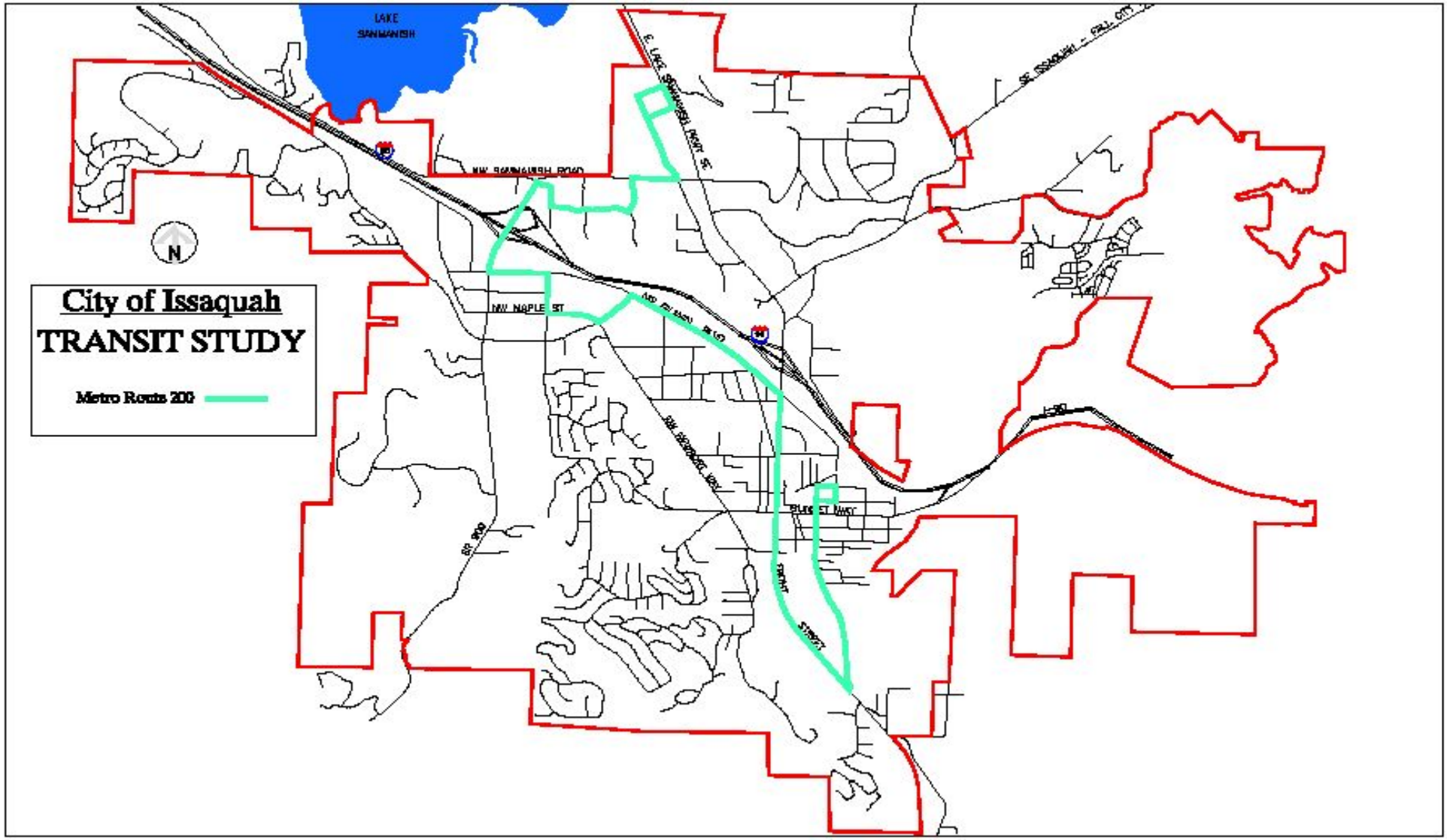
Table F
Sample Issaquah Weekday Transit Ridership

Consequently, ridership within the City of Issaquah represents only a small proportion of total route ridership on those routes other than Route 200. The following sections briefly describe the bus routes serving the City of Issaquah. Sample average weekday ridership is summarized in ***Table F***.

3.3.2.1 Route 200

King County Metro Route 200 is a circulator route serving neighborhoods inside the City of Issaquah. Unlike other King County Metro routes, no fare is charged on this route.

Figure 6: Route 200 Map



Of the 692 daily unlinked passenger trips operated by Route 200, 74 occurred north of I-90, 92 trips from I-90 to and including the Issaquah Park and Ride, 217 between the Park and Ride and Front Street/Gilman Blvd. and 309 between Gilman Boulevard and Sunset Way.

The location with the maximum daily boardings is at Front St. and SE Andrews St. The maximum alightings occur at the Issaquah Park and Ride which also has the greatest all day weekday passenger activity (boardings plus alightings.) ***Figure 6*** shows the Route 200 alignment.

3.3.2.2 Route 209

King County Metro Route 209 provides service weekdays and Saturdays between North Bend and Issaquah. Weekday service operates hourly from 6:23 AM to 10:12 PM and Saturday service operates hourly from 8:31 AM to 10:05 PM.

Of the 136 daily riders counted on this route, 61 or 44.9% had at least one trip end in the City of Issaquah. The Issaquah Park and Ride lot showed the highest passenger activity of any location within the City of Issaquah. No other locations exhibited any significant passenger activity.

3.3.2.3 Route 210

King County Metro Route 210 operates weekdays between the Issaquah Park and Ride and downtown Seattle. Of the 505 riders observed on this route, only 24 (4.7%) had at least one trip end in the City of Issaquah. Service is provided westbound from the Issaquah Park and Ride approximately every 20 minutes from 6:00 AM until 7:37 AM and eastbound from downtown Seattle approximately every 30 minutes from 3:35 PM until 5:34 PM. No weekend service is offered. Most Issaquah passenger activity takes place along West Lake Sammamish Parkway. Passenger activity at the Issaquah Park and Ride lot is minimal.

3.3.2.4 Route 214

King County Metro Route 214 operates from North Bend, Snoqualmie and Fall City to downtown Seattle weekday peak hours via downtown Issaquah and the Issaquah Park and Ride. Fourteen westbound trips from downtown Issaquah and the Issaquah Park and Ride are operated in the mornings from 5:21 to 8:00 and 13 eastbound trips are operated between downtown Seattle and the Issaquah Park and Ride in the afternoon between 3:40 and 5:50 PM. Nine of these afternoon trips also serve downtown Issaquah.

Of the 1,214 passenger boardings recorded on this route, 627 boardings occurred within the City of Issaquah (51.6% of the total.) The great majority of the Issaquah passenger activity occurs at the Issaquah Park and Ride lot.

3.3.2.5 Route 216

Route 216 is a new commuter route from the Sammamish Plateau to downtown Seattle. Four AM peak trips into Seattle and four PM peak trips from downtown Seattle are operated each weekday. No weekend or holiday service is currently offered. Service operates through Issaquah via East Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, NE 51st Street, 220th Avenue SE, NW Sammamish Road, SR 900 and Interstate-90.

Figure 7: Route 209 Map

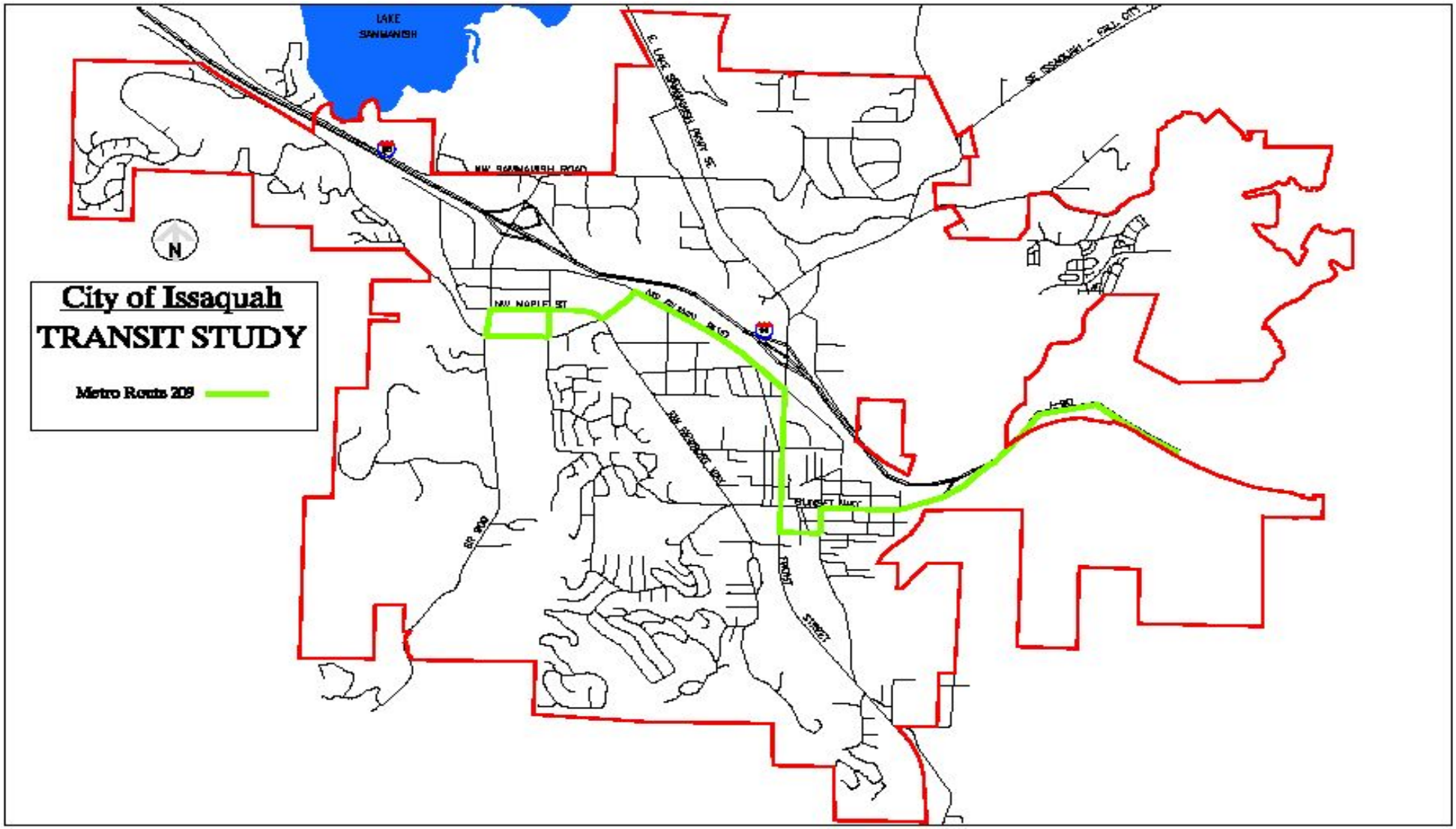


Figure 8: Route 210 Map

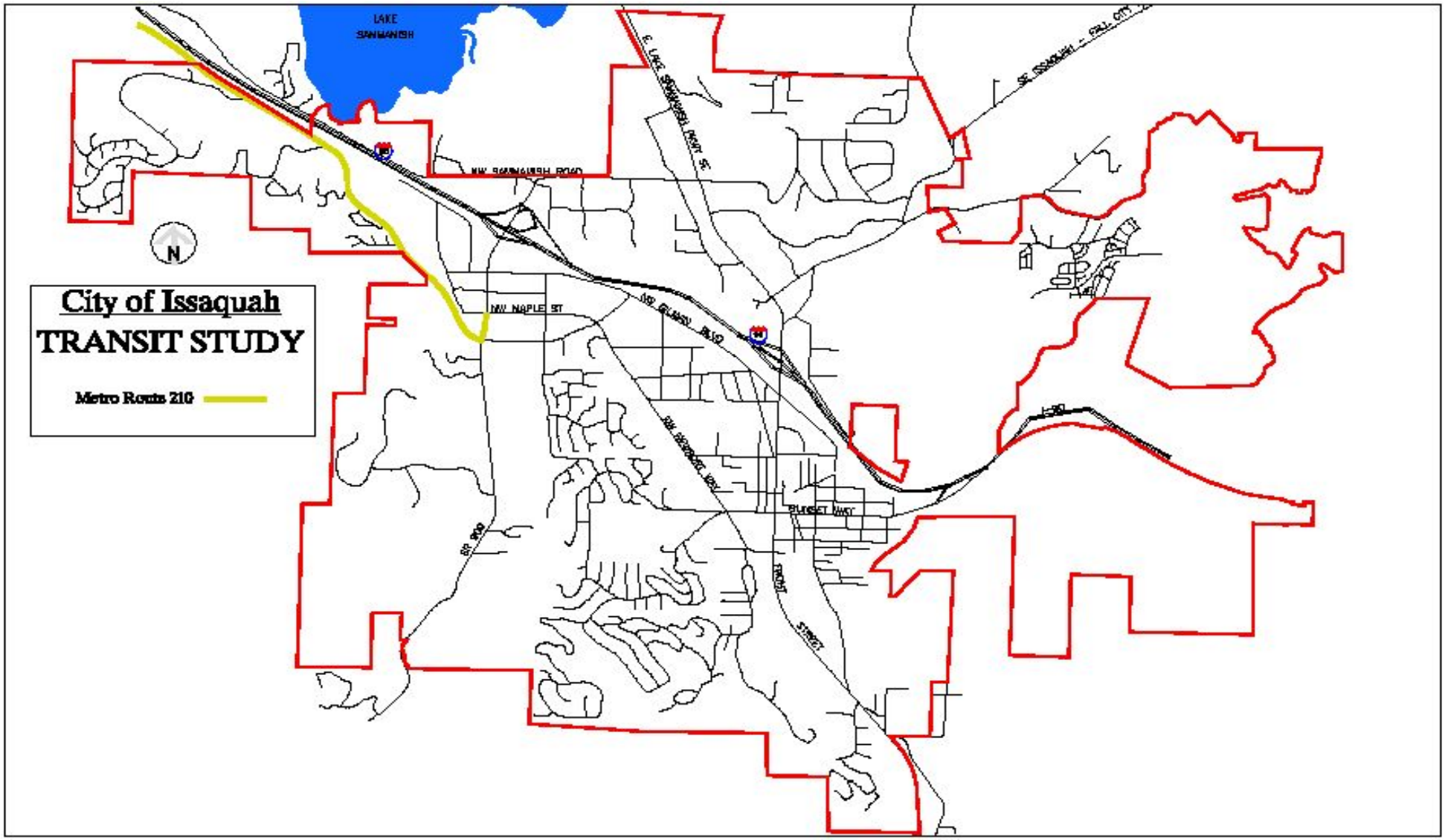


Figure 9: Route 214 Map

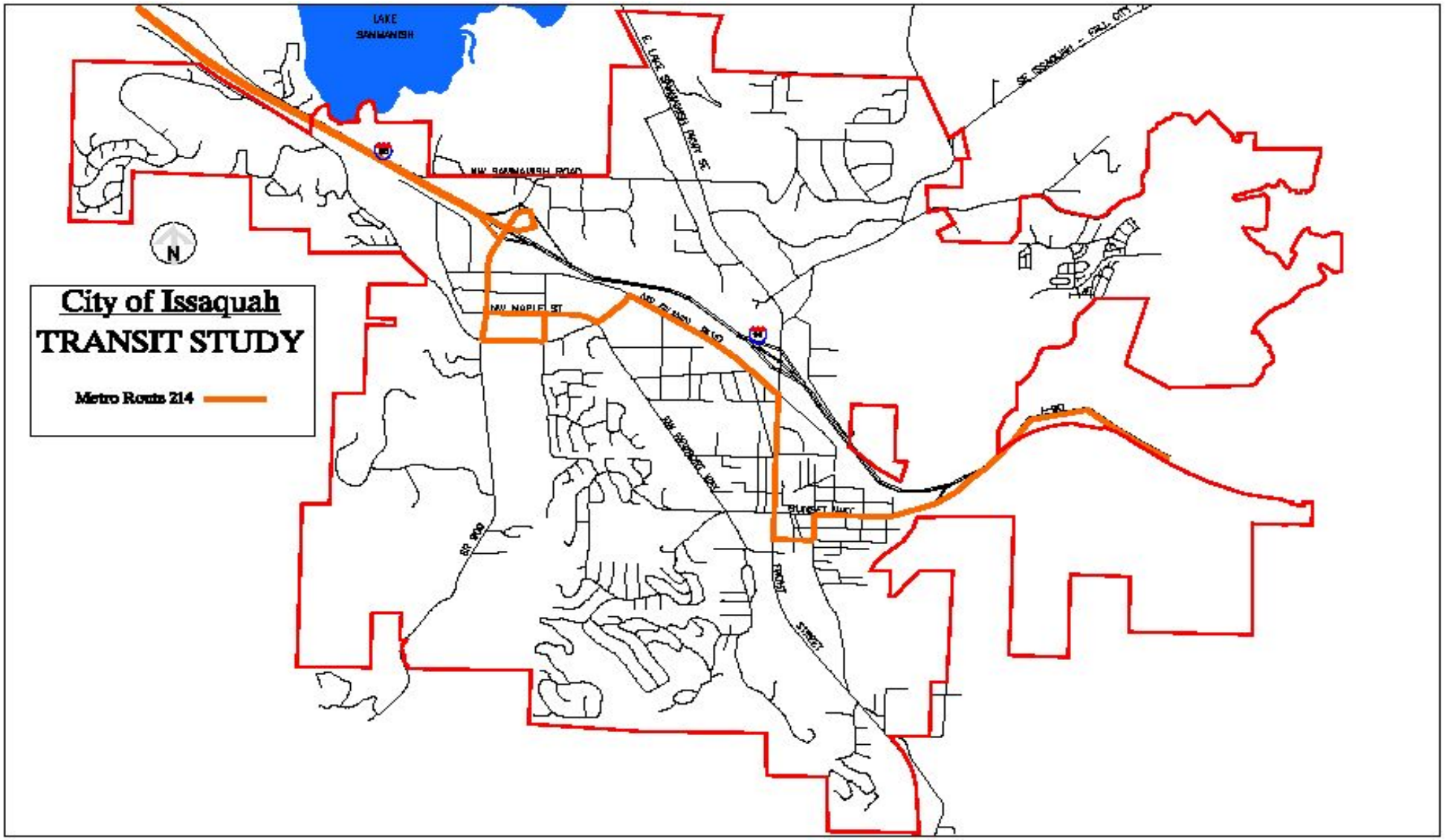
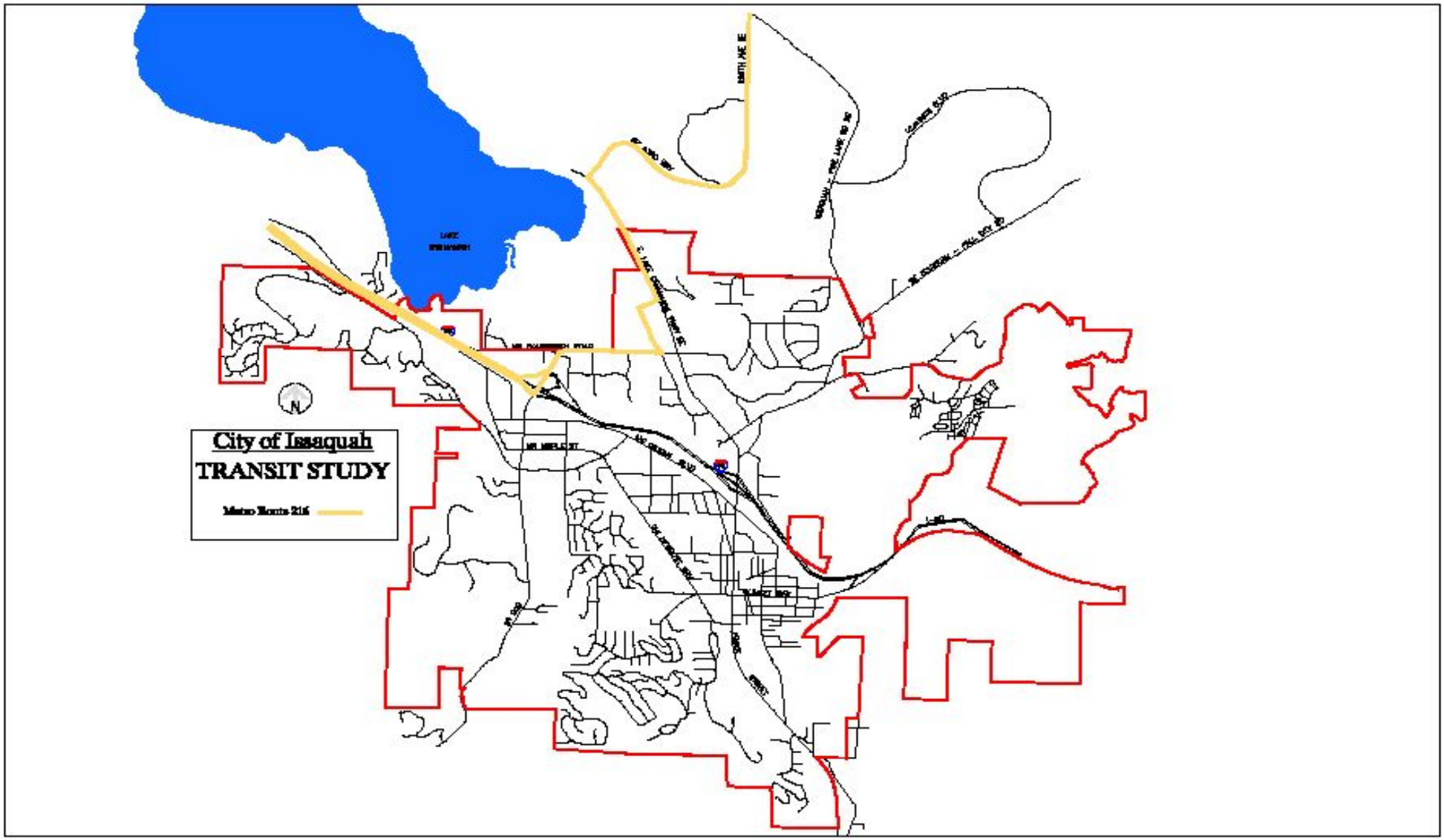


Figure 10: Route 216 Map



3.3.2.6 Route 217

King County Metro Route 217 is a peak hour reverse commute express from downtown Seattle to Issaquah via Interstate-90 and Eastgate. This route does not serve the Issaquah Park and Ride, exiting Interstate-90 at SR 900 and operating north to NW Sammamish Road and east to East Lake Sammamish Parkway. Ridership data was unavailable for Route 217 at the time of this writing.

3.3.2.7 Route 269

King County Metro Route 269 provides service between the Overlake Park and Ride and downtown Issaquah via Redmond, Sahalee and Pine Lake between 5:12 AM and 8:37 AM and between 4:12 PM and 8:04 PM weekday peak periods. No weekend service is provided on route 269.

While the Issaquah Park and Ride was the most frequently-used boarding and alighting location, passenger activity occurs throughout the route alignment within the City of Issaquah. The route 269 alignment is depicted in ***Figure 12.***

Of the 56 boardings recorded by King County Metro, 28 (or 50%) occurred within the City of Issaquah and 36 of the 45 alightings recorded on route 269 occurred within the City of Issaquah, 80% of the total.

3.3.2.8 Route 271

King County Metro Route 271 provides service between the City of Issaquah and the University District in Seattle, serving Eastgate, Bellevue Community College and downtown Bellevue enroute. Service to Issaquah is provided between 5:21 AM and 11:32 PM weekdays at approximately 30-minute intervals middays, 30-minute intervals during peak periods and hourly during evening hours.

Saturday service is provided from 6:35 AM until 11:30 PM half-hourly during midday hours and hourly during evening hours. Sunday and holiday service is provided between 7:40 AM and 11:28 PM at hourly intervals.

Of the 2,483 weekday boardings recorded by King County Metro on route 271, 330 occurred within the City of Issaquah, primarily at the Issaquah Park and Ride (13.3% of the total.) Of the 2,442 alightings recorded, only 28 occurred within the City (1.1% of the total.)

3.3.2.9 Route 927

King County Metro Route 927 provides service between downtown Issaquah and the Sammamish Plateau via the Issaquah Park and Ride lot. Service is provided between 6:20 AM and 6:08 PM weekdays at approximate hourly intervals. Saturday service is provided hourly between 9:11 AM and 5:55 PM. No Sunday or holiday service is offered. ***Figure 14*** depicts the route 927 alignment.

3.3.2.10 Route 554

Sound Transit Route 554 offers service between Issaquah Park-and-Ride and downtown Seattle via Interstate-90 via Eastgate. Service operates half-hourly between 6:00 AM and 11:00 PM weekdays, between 6:30 AM and 11:00 PM Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays. It is anticipated that Route 554 service will be extended to the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride when that facility is operational.

3.3.2.11 Route 555

Sound Transit Route 555 provides service between the Issaquah Park-and-Ride lot and downtown Bellevue and the Northgate area of Seattle via Interstate-90, Interstate-405 and SR-520. Service is offered half-hourly during weekday peak hours only. No weekend or holiday service is currently offered.

Figure 11: Route 217 Map

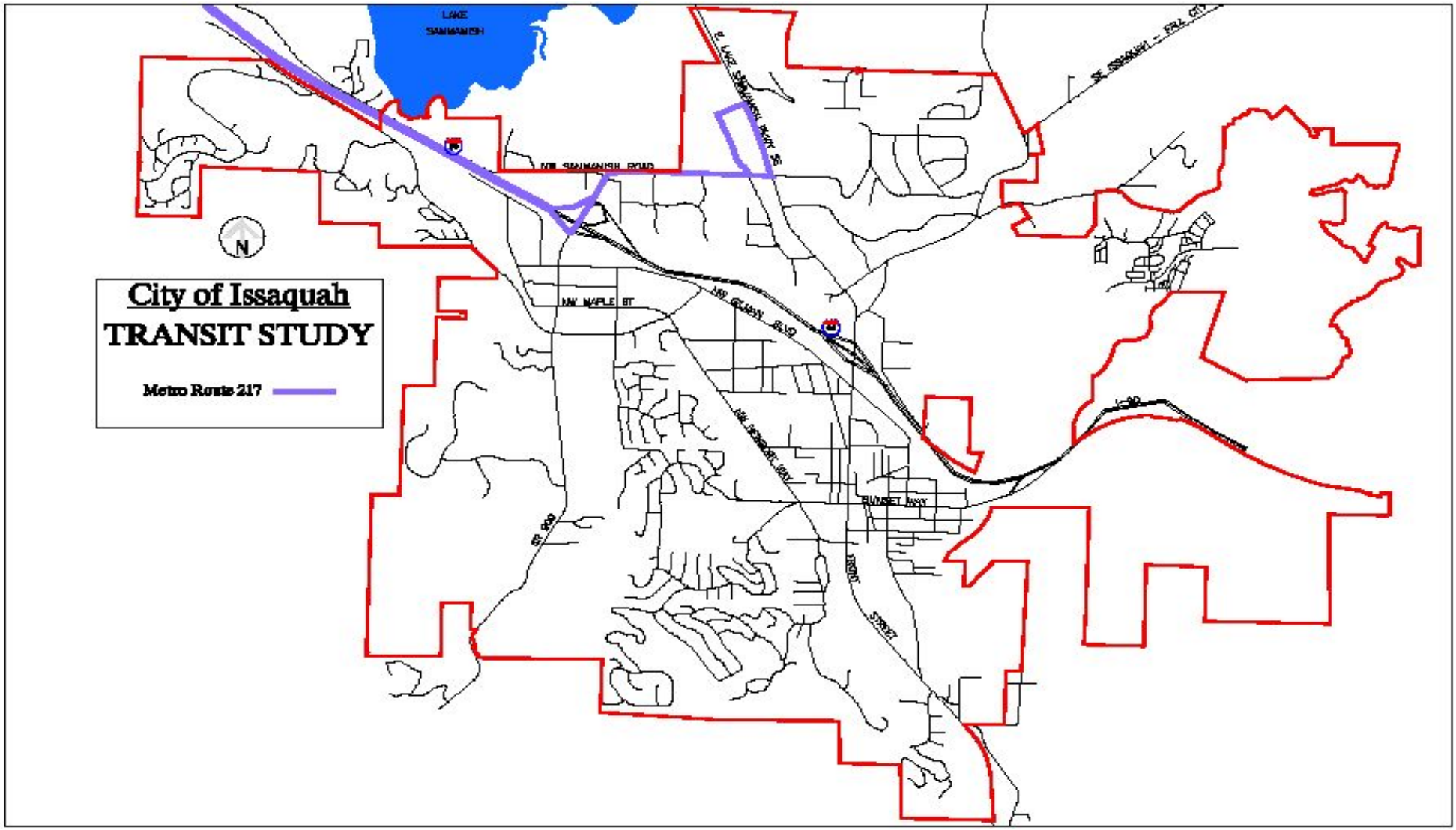


Figure 12: Route 269 Map

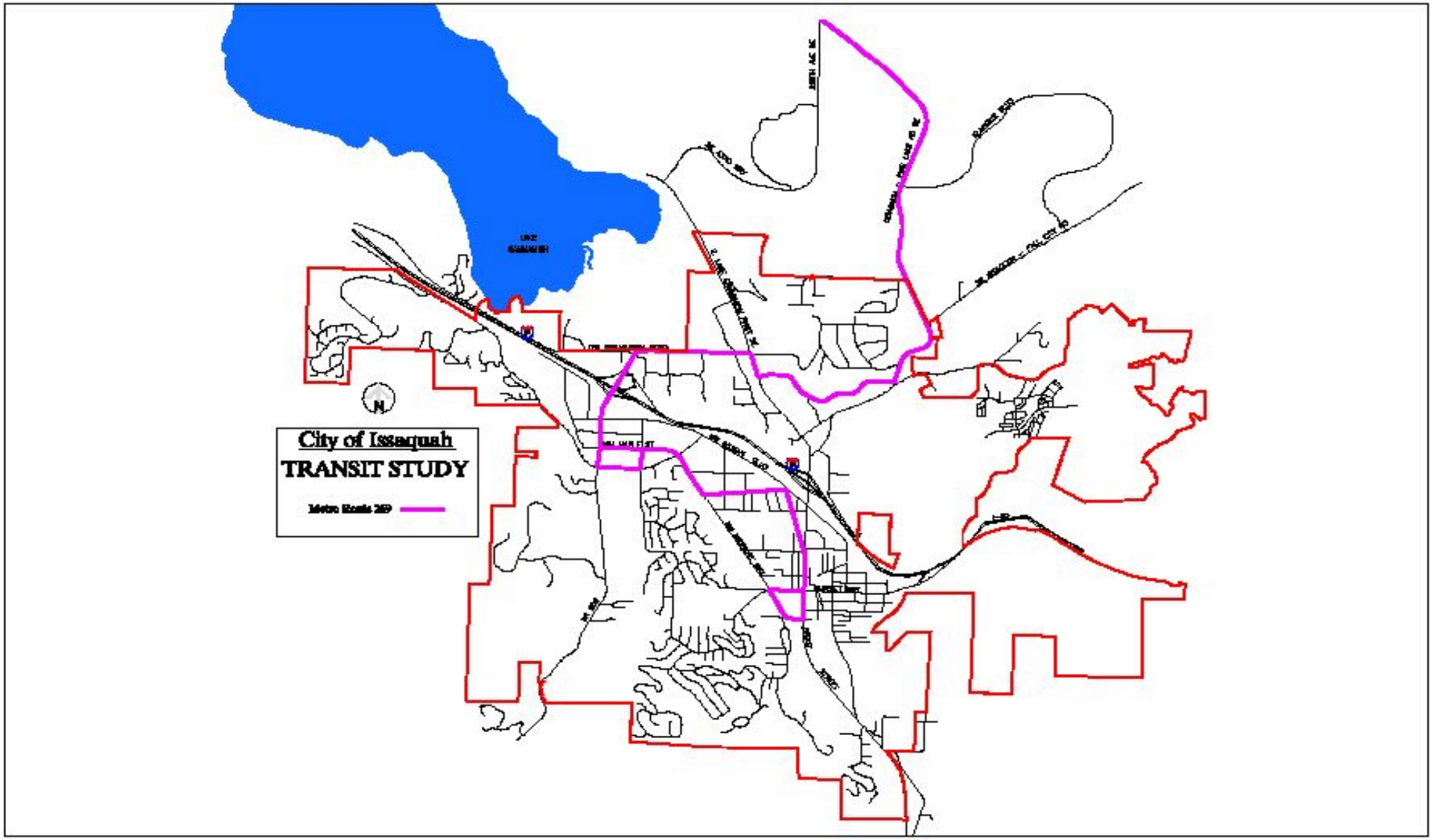


Figure 13: Route 271 Map

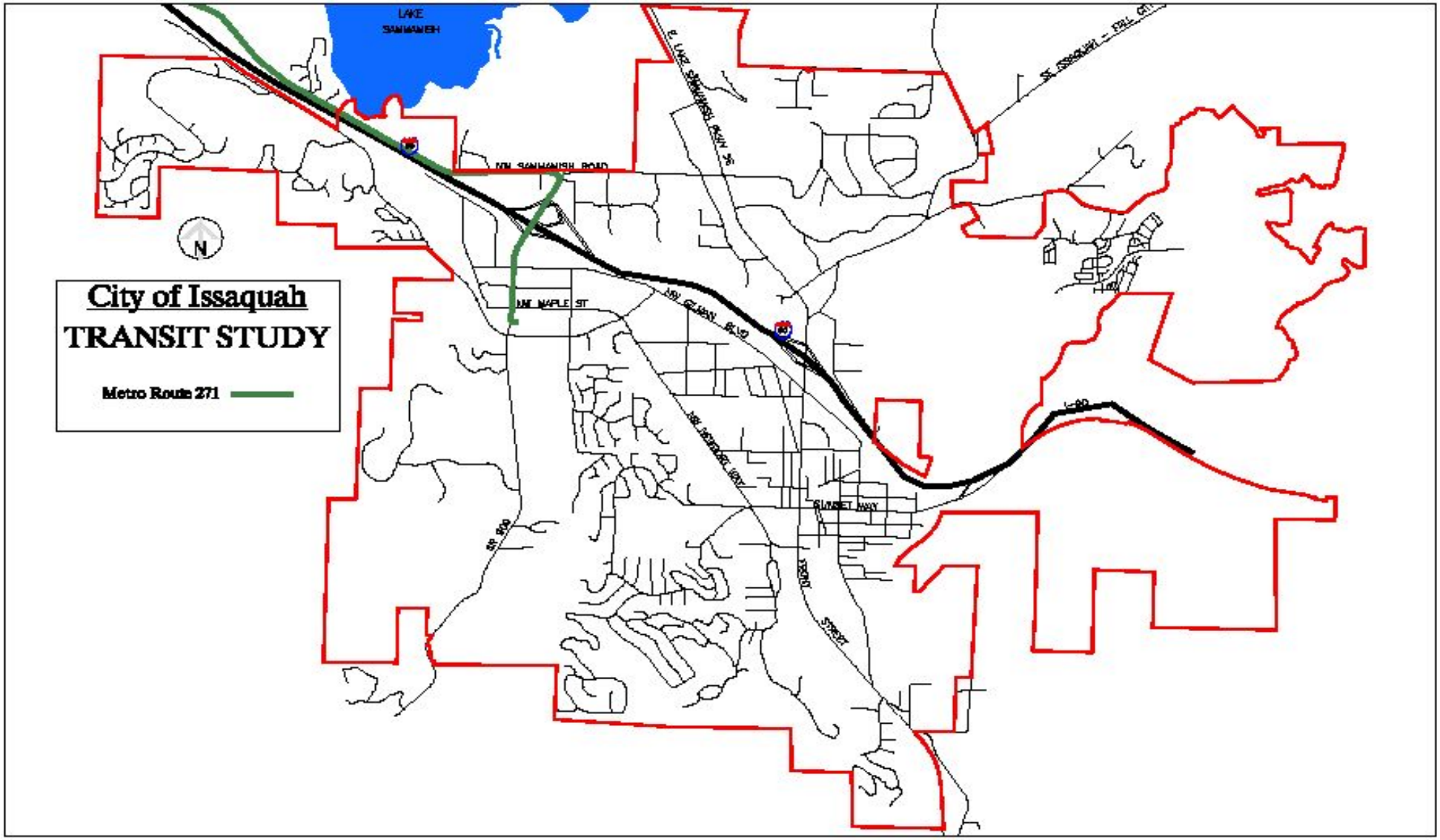


Figure 14: Route 927 Map

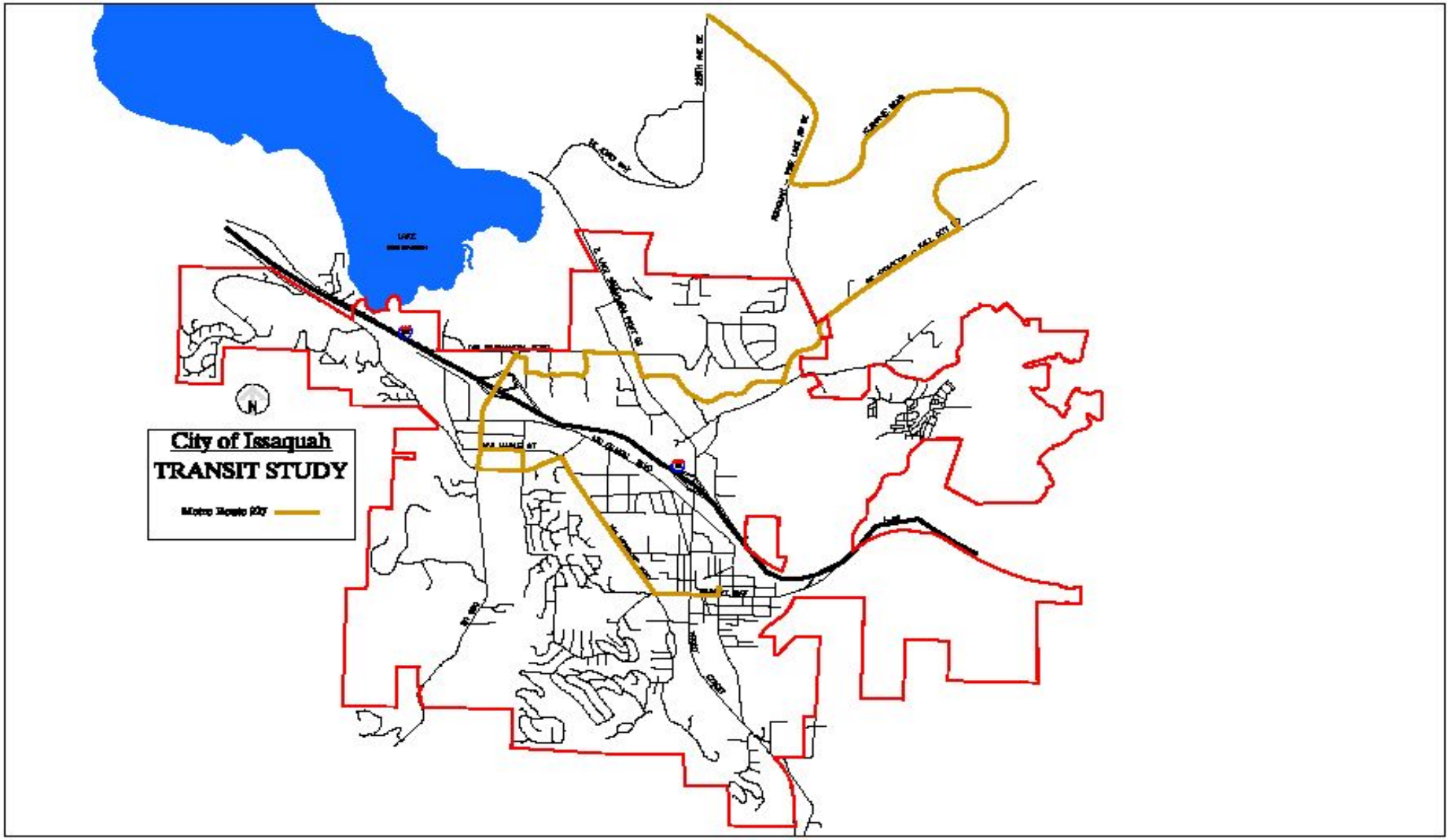
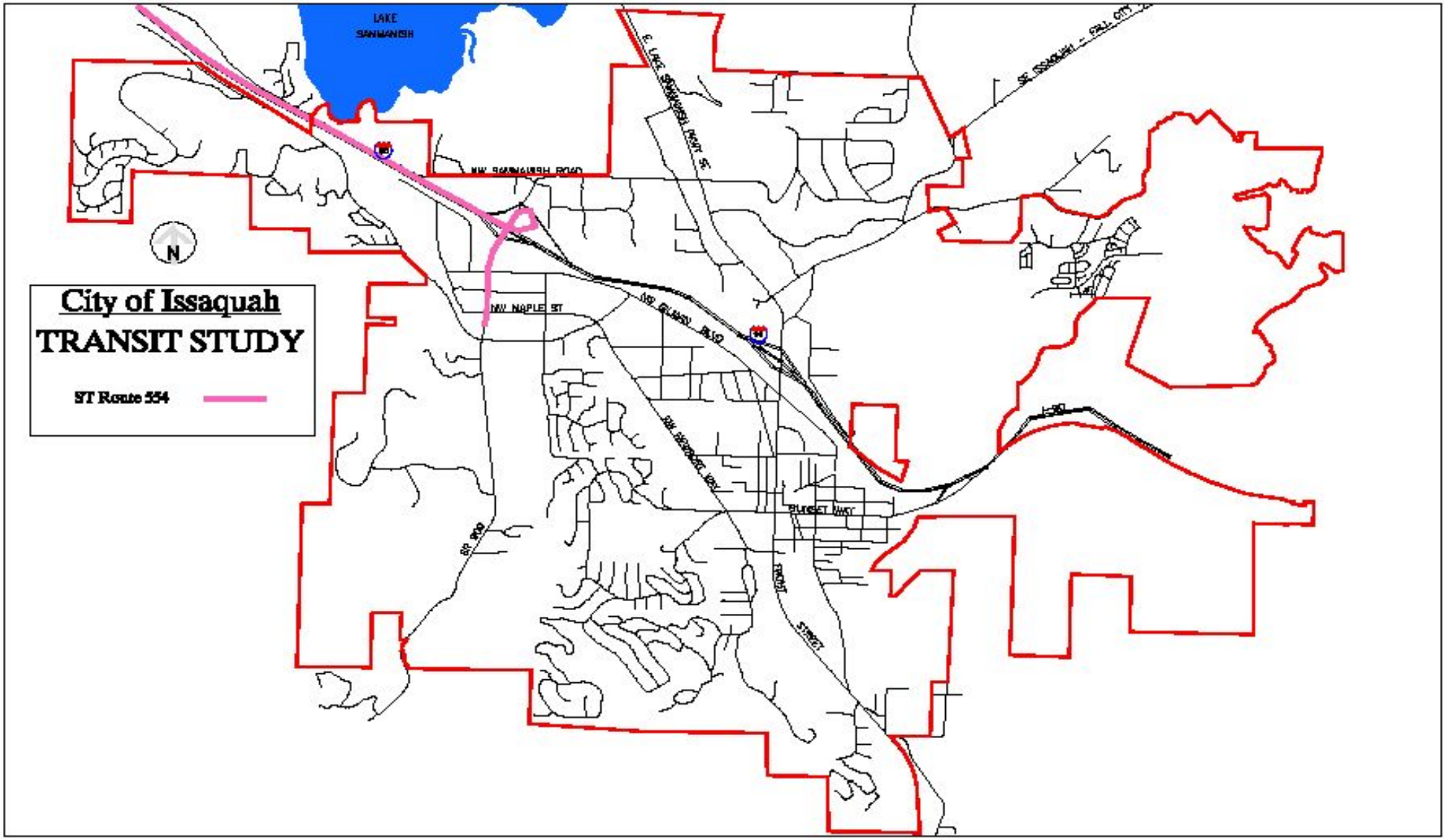


Figure 15: Route 554/555 Map



Chapter 4
Future Transit Markets and Facilities

Chapter 4 summarizes the methodology and findings of Tasks 3 and 4 of the Issaquah Transit Needs Study, focusing on an evaluation of future transit markets in the Issaquah area and an evaluation of existing transit facilities.

4.1 Identify Future Transit Markets in the Study Area

This section addresses the changes to existing land uses and travel markets as they may affect future transit needs.

4.1.1 Growth Areas

The Issaquah concurrency model predicts future roadway volumes based on existing and projected developments. Based on the concurrency model, several factors will significantly influence transportation demand in Issaquah:

- Continued growth on the Sammamish Plateau
- Continued growth in Maple Valley
- Development of the Talus urban village
- Continued development of the Issaquah Highlands urban village
- Development of the Southeast Issaquah urban village

Each of the growth areas will affect the transit propensity and market potential for transit service in Issaquah. Talus and Issaquah Highlands are two areas where most employment growth and a majority of population growth in Issaquah are expected to occur. Southeast Issaquah (Park Pointe) is still in the long-term planning stage.

4.1.1.1 Sammamish and Maple Valley

Growth on the Sammamish Plateau and in the Maple Valley region will continue to adversely affect the City of Issaquah's roadway system. Both Sammamish and Maple Valley residents travel through Issaquah to access Interstate-90. Based on the concurrency model, the completion of the Southeast Bypass and the SPAR will alleviate, but not solve traffic congestion on Front Street or SR 900. In addition to traffic capacity on roadways, Issaquah park-and-ride facilities will be affected by continued growth on the Sammamish Plateau and Maple Valley areas. Many current and future park-and-ride users are not Issaquah residents, traveling from outlying areas to reach Issaquah.

4.1.1.2 Issaquah Highlands

Issaquah Highlands is a 2,223-acre urban village that includes residential and commercial developments, open space, recreational areas, and a planned 1,000-stall park-and-ride lot (only 500 stalls are currently funded.) Issaquah Highlands is located on Grand Ridge approximately one mile northeast of downtown Issaquah, immediately north of Interstate-90. When completed, Issaquah Highlands will include 3,250 residential units (housing approximately 7,000 persons), including 1,400 single-family homes, 1,000 condominiums, and 850 apartments. The development will also include up to 2.9 million square feet of office space and 425,000 square feet of retail space. An additional 0.5 million square feet of office and retail, or their equivalent, have also been approved. The retail and office space are clustered in the Town Center. The project is

expected to be at full build-out in 2010 (see ***Table A*** on page 6.) Upon build-out, the commercial land uses are projected to generate approximately 6,800 p.m. peak trips and the residential land uses are projected to generate an additional 2,500 p.m. peak hour trips (assuming no trip reduction factors.) Bus service to both Seattle and Bellevue is planned from the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride lot.

4.1.1.3 Talus

East Village, now called Talus, is a 627-acre urban village located on the east slope of Cougar Mountain. Talus will be located on SR 900, approximately 0.5 miles south of Newport Way, and is projected to include residential, commercial and retail space. Upon project build-out, Talus will include approximately 1,750 dwelling units, 800,000 square feet of office space, and 50,000 square feet of retail space. Full build-out is projected to occur in 2009 (see Table B on page 7).

The Talus project is expected to generate approximately 1,500 net new p.m. peak trips. At this time, no transit service provider has committed to providing transit service to Talus, despite its relatively close proximity to the Issaquah Park-and-Ride facility.

4.1.1.4 Southeast Issaquah

The Southeast Issaquah urban village development is currently in the planning stage. The development is planned to be located just east of Issaquah High School and on the east side of the proposed Southeast Bypass. The development is planned to access the Southeast Bypass.

The current preferred alternative for this development consists of the following land uses: 164,000 square feet of office space, 6,000 square feet of retail space, and 660 dwelling units, most of which are multi-family (only 33 are single-family detached housing). The estimated time of completion of this urban village is 2009 or later.

4.1.2 Impacts of New Growth on Major City Highway Corridors

The concentrated new growth in the City of Issaquah will impact existing congested roadways throughout the city. However, the mitigation process for the two urban villages will contribute to increased roadway capacity. Based on existing transit patterns and future projected growth, four transit corridors are proposed. Each of these proposed transit corridors is projected to have sufficient peak and all-day bus volumes to warrant further transit capital investments. Each proposed transit corridor is discussed separately.

4.1.2.1 SPAR

This roadway connects the Issaquah Highlands development with a new interchange at Interstate-90. The SPAR will also provide a new link from the Sammamish Plateau to Interstate-90. Upon project build-out, the SPAR is projected to be fairly congested. No bus service is currently using the SPAR, as it is still under construction. Sound Transit and King County Metro are expected to serve the SPAR and the SPAR figures prominently in this project's recommendations for future transit services (see Chapter 6).

4.1.2.2 Front Street

Front Street is a major destination for existing transit patrons and is expected to remain so in the future. Currently, Front Street is frequently congested and existing bus routes on Front Street experience frequent and significant delays, particularly on the stretch between Sunset Boulevard and Interstate-90. Traffic forecasts suggest that increased

regional development will result in increased automobile volumes, further exacerbating congestion in this area. Bus routes that currently use Front Street include routes 200, 209, 214, 217 and 269.

4.1.2.3 SR 900

SR 900 is currently very congested. No bus stops are located on SR 900 between the Issaquah Park-and-Ride and Interstate-90, even though the buses travel close to both employment and retail establishments. Buses are frequently delayed as a result of SR 900 congestion. Partially funded as a mitigation for the Talus development, HOV lanes are being constructed between Newport Way and Interstate-90, which should allow more predictable travel times. Sidewalks along this segment of SR 900 are also being added. Bus routes that currently use SR 900 include 200, 269, 271, 554, and 555.

4.1.2.4 NW Gilman Boulevard

Gilman Boulevard is a principal transit arterial in the City of Issaquah. Retail and commercial facilities are the predominant land uses along Gilman Boulevard. Bus stops are on regular intervals along Gilman Boulevard. Several bus routes currently use Gilman Boulevard, including routes 200, 214, and 271.

4.1.2.5 Southeast Bypass

The Southeast Bypass is a planned arterial proposed east of Issaquah High School for connecting Interstate-90 to Issaquah-Hobart Road. This roadway is currently in the environmental process, and was considered for inclusion as a transit corridor. The exact alignment is currently still unknown, as is the ultimate configuration of the roadway. In addition, it appears that none of the alternatives travel past any substantial transit destinations other than the Southeast Issaquah urban village development (Park Pointe,) as it bypasses downtown Issaquah. We recommend, however, that the Southeast Bypass be designed with future transit service in mind, with appropriately designed bus stop and pedestrian amenities.

4.1.3 Impacts of New Growth on Issaquah Transit Facilities

The Issaquah Park-and-Ride and the adjacent Tibbets Creek Park-and-Ride are currently operating at capacity. No expansion of either facility is planned at this time, and it is projected that these facilities will remain at capacity for the foreseeable future.

Planned facilities include the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride and the Issaquah Transit Center. A site has been selected for the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride and funding for 500 stalls has been committed. At this time, discussions are ongoing to identify additional funding to enlarge the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride to 1,000 stalls. Current demand projections show that Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride will be at or near capacity shortly after facility opening. The park-and-ride is projected for completion in 2004.

The Issaquah Transit Center is a Sound Transit-funded project just starting the planning process. At this time, a firm location for the facility has not been identified. In addition, a new Sammamish Park-and-Ride and the expansion of the Eastgate Park-and-Ride facilities may provide some short-term relief of overcrowding at the Issaquah facilities.

4.1.4 Existing and Future Markets Unserved by Transit

Based on demographic trends, and trip distribution assumptions for the new urban villages, the commuter transit market in Issaquah will continue to have an orientation toward both Bellevue and downtown Seattle. As with most suburban areas, trip patterns are widely dispersed.

Based on the growth patterns for planned developments and roadways, several potential markets for transit service have been identified.

- Talus has no committed bus service from either Sound Transit or King County Metro. The urban village design, and its proximity to the Issaquah Park-and-Ride suggest future transit market potential.
- Sound Transit has committed to providing service from the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride to Seattle via Route 554. This service will also serve the Town Center and the Microsoft Campus. The residential areas of Issaquah Highlands are not slated for any local service. The urban village design and resulting developmental densities of the Issaquah Highlands residential areas should make this region one of high transit potential.
- Park-and-ride capacity in south Issaquah is inadequate. Construction of new park-and-rides in Sammamish and Issaquah Highlands will relieve some of the capacity issues, but in the long-term, additional stalls may be necessary.
- Southeast Issaquah has no committed bus service from any transit agency. The urban village design, and its proximity to downtown Issaquah and Issaquah High School suggest that this will be a future transit market.
- Currently, large employers are clustered around the intersection of 56th Street and SE Lake Sammamish Parkway (see Figure 14, previous page.) They are served by local Issaquah bus routes (200, 269 and 927) as well as a peak directional bus (217) from Seattle in the morning and to Seattle in the afternoon. More opportunities to serve the reverse commute markets should be explored.
- A new crossing of Interstate-90 between SR 900 and Front Street would facilitate transit service, open new markets, and dramatically improve speed and reliability for those routes no longer forced to take either SR 900 or Front Street to cross the freeway.

4.2 Transit Facilities

There are relatively few transit passenger facilities in the Issaquah area other than at the Issaquah Park and Ride lot.

4.2.1 Passenger Shelters

Within the City of Issaquah, eight passenger shelters have been identified by King County Metro. These are located at the following locations:

- Eastbound on East Sunset Way 100 feet farside of Rainier Boulevard South
- Northbound on Front Street South 70 feet farside of Southeast Andrews Street
- Issaquah Park and Ride Loading Zone (2 shelters)
- Northbound on Maple Street NW 343 feet nearside of NW Gilman Boulevard
- Southbound on Maple Street NW 360 feet farside of NW Gilman Boulevard
- Westbound on NW Gilman Boulevard 390 feet farside of NW Juniper Street
- Westbound on NW Juniper Street 10 feet nearside of 7th Avenue NW

4.2.2 Issaquah Transit Center

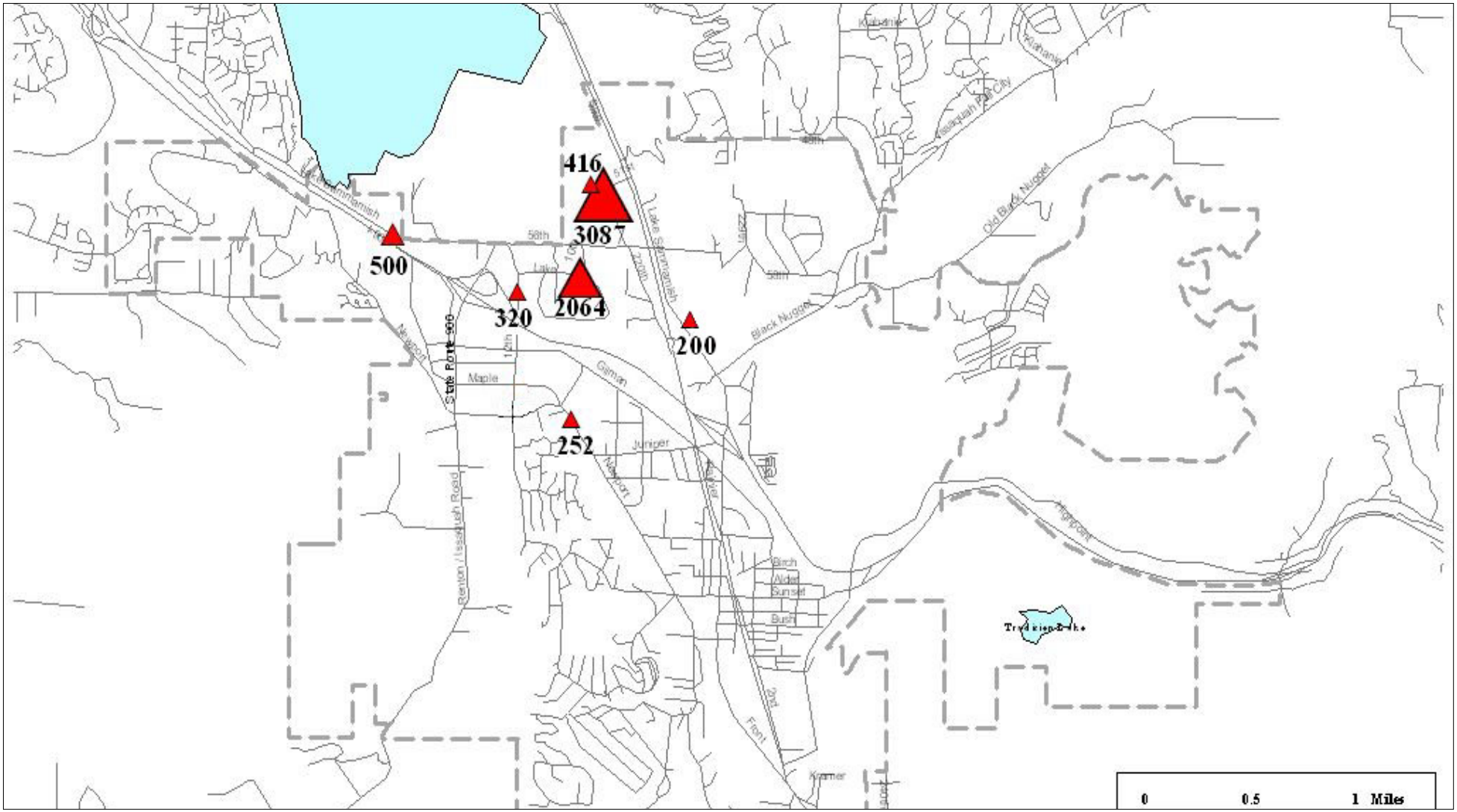
The planned Issaquah Transit Center, with funding from Sound Transit, is just entering the planning stage and no site has yet been selected for that facility. Recommendations for determining the location of this facility are included in Chapter 5.

4.2.3 Park and Ride Facilities

The Issaquah Park-and-Ride lot and its companion facility the Tibbets Creek Park-and-Ride lot, which is located just across the street, currently operate consistently in excess of capacity. Typically, these facilities are full on weekday mornings by about 8:00 AM, forcing many area residents to travel farther to the west to use other King County Metro park and ride facilities, principally at Eastgate and South Bellevue. Nearly one Issaquah Park-and-Ride user in six uses another park-and-ride lot at least once per week. About 60% of those do so because of capacity limitations at the Issaquah facility.

A new park-and-ride facility is scheduled for construction in the Issaquah Highlands adjacent to the SPAR when that roadway connection to Interstate-90 is completed. This facility will serve the residents of the Sammamish Plateau and Issaquah Highlands areas with funding for an initial capacity of approximately 500 stalls but with an ultimate design capacity of approximately double that.

Figure 16: Issaquah CTR Employers Map



Chapter 5
Recommendations

Based upon the findings described in Chapters 2 through 4, a number of short- and long-term recommendations have been formulated to improve the transit environment in the City of Issaquah. These recommendations fall into four categories:

1. City policy modifications to put transit facility requirements on an equal basis with streets and roads
2. Street and roadway improvements necessary to help address the public transportation needs identified in this report,
3. Transit service improvements to address specific mobility needs and
4. Transit passenger amenities to improve transit riding and access for existing and potential riders.

5.1 Policy Modifications

The following section summarizes the proposed modifications to City of Issaquah policies. These are recommended to enhance the operating environment for transit and to enhance the environment for prospective transit riders and other pedestrians in the City of Issaquah.

5.1.1 Transit Roadway Designations

In support of those recommendations for physical improvements, it is recommended that the City of Issaquah bestow a formal role for public transit within the City by designating each street and roadway within the City for use by transit vehicles according to the expectations for existing and future transit use. The following designations and characteristics are recommended.

5.1.1.1 Transitway

A transitway is characterized by having a separate facility for public transportation modes such as commuter rail, light rail, monorail, subway, or busway. Vehicle stops are typically about 1 or less per mile on this type of facility. An expressway bus lane or transitway lane can accommodate as many as 400 directional bus trips per hour. No transitway facilities are identified in the City of Issaquah at this time.

5.1.1.2 Transit Arterial

Transit arterials are characterized by having high transit volumes and by utilizing priority lanes or signals for public transit vehicles. Transit arterials constitute a principal corridor for bus or trolley services. Typical stop spacing can range from 800 to 2500 feet on transit arterial roadways, depending on service mode.

Service frequencies can range from 5 directional trips per hour to as high as 60 directional trips per hour for a shared arterial lane, and as high as 200 directional trips per hour for a dedicated transit arterial lane with bus pullouts. Transit arterials within the City of Issaquah should include SR 900 from NW Sammamish Road to Newport Way, NW Gilman Boulevard from Maple Street to Front Street, Front Street from Sunset Way to Interstate-90 and East Lake Sammamish Parkway from Interstate-90 to SE 51st Street.

5.1.1.3 Transit Collector

Transit collectors exhibit medium bus volumes and function as a minor corridor or single route for buses. School bus routes often operate along transit collector roadways. Typical stop spacing on transit collectors are 600 to 800 feet. Typical levels of transit service along transit collector streets are 4 directional trips per hour.

5.1.1.4 Local Transit Roadway

Local transit roadways correspond to routes using small buses, paratransit vehicles or jitneys, typically operating at low frequencies of service (2 directional trips per hour or less) with stop spacing of approximately 500 to 600 feet.

5.1.2 Land Use Policies

Recommendations are also being made to improve the transit-supportive characteristics of land uses in the City of Issaquah. These are briefly outlined below.

5.1.2.1 Transit Access to Existing Land Uses

There is a need to "retrofit" existing property developments in order to permit improved pedestrian linkages between building frontages and sidewalks and bus stops along adjacent streets and roadways. The City should develop policies to provide safe pedestrian pathways between the bus stops along streets and roadways served by public transit and the building frontages that are often set back from the street and often separated from the street by parking areas.

Figure 17
Parking Facility Pedestrian Access

In this same vein, the City of Issaquah should adopt policies that provide incentives for encouraging the development of safe pedestrian pathways across the parking areas of retail and commercial properties, such as those shown in ***Figure 17***, connecting the storefronts with the sidewalks and bus stops along adjacent streets.

A federal appeals court in San Francisco has just ruled that local governments must make public sidewalks accessible for wheel-chair users and other disabled users. The appeals court found that cities must maintain sidewalks including "the provision of curb ramps in order for sidewalks to be accessible to individuals with disabilities." This ruling, if upheld, could have wide-ranging implications for maintenance of sidewalks and other pedestrian paths.

5.1.2.2 Transit Access and Facilities in New Developments

The City also needs to adopt policies that will preserve these enhancements for transit and pedestrians in all future developments within the City. This can be done through the permitting process for future developments.

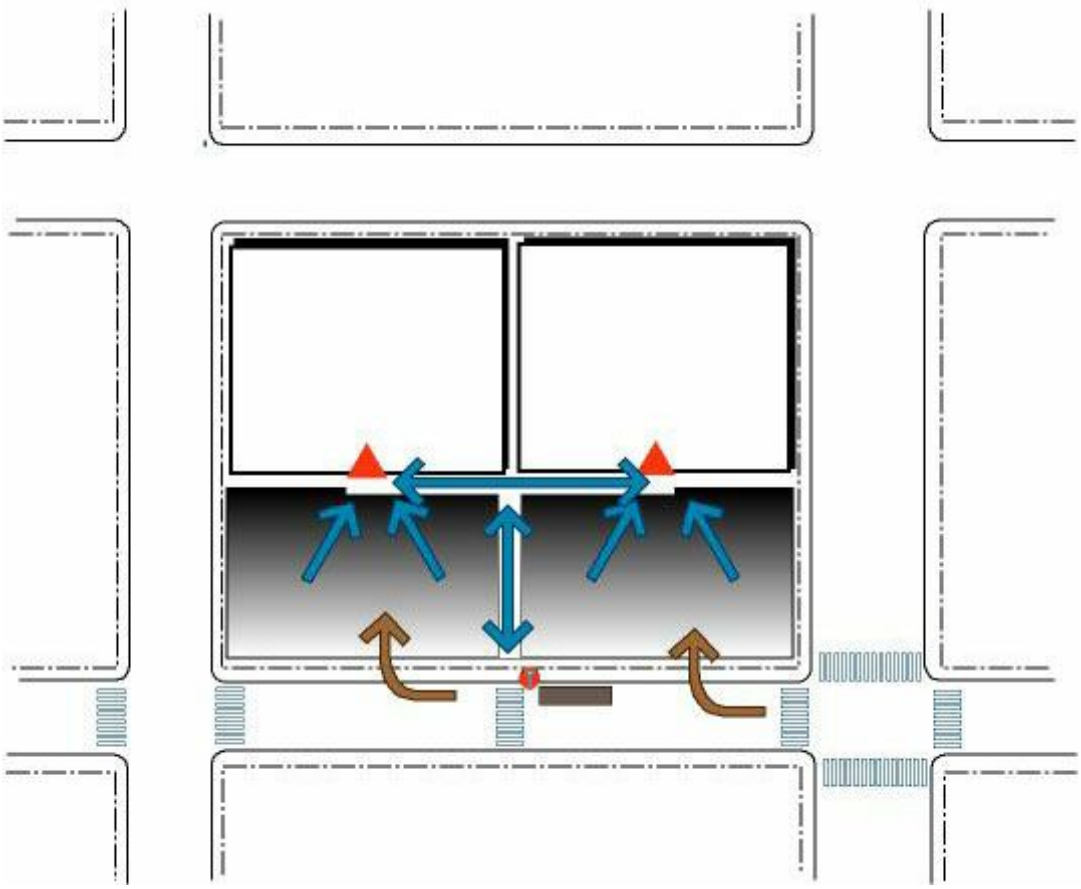


Figure 18
Providing for Pedestrian Access in Auto-Oriented Developments

Figure 18 demonstrates how this result may be accomplished in the development of future auto-oriented developments. The pedestrian access along the storefronts (shown as blue arrows between the two red triangles) is a common feature of most existing developments. This is then augmented by the provision of safe (e.g. raised or clearly striped) pedestrian access between the storefronts and the adjacent streets and sidewalks separated from the auto access into the property (brown arrows.) Transit stops are then located adjacent to the pedestrian access walks along the street.

An even better design mandates the location of storefronts adjacent to sidewalks, with parking and auto access provided from the rear of the building or via an alleyway. Such a transformation in land use patterns has been under way in downtown Bellevue over the past decade.

The enhancement of the transit and pedestrian environment may also be accomplished through the establishment of transit benefit districts throughout the City in which incentives can be offered to property owners and developers in exchange for the provision of transit and pedestrian enhancements. The City is encouraged to work closely with King County Metro and Sound Transit to identify guaranteed transit improvements which may be offered to developers in return for the inclusion of improved transit and pedestrian facilities in future property developments.

5.2 Transit Corridor Street and Roadway Improvements

A number of street and roadway improvements are currently under study or construction in the City of Issaquah. Many of these improvements directly address transportation needs of transit patrons as well as those of private vehicle drivers. These recommendations relate to those projects currently under construction or study and do not represent any new major roadway projects.

5.2.1 Recommended SPAR Corridor Improvements

The SPAR project is designed to connect the Sammamish Plateau and Issaquah Highlands areas with Interstate-90 via a new access interchange. This project is currently under construction and scheduled for completion in 2003.

In order to effectively and efficiently serve both the Sammamish Plateau population and the new commercial and residential development in Issaquah Highlands, the following transit corridor improvements are recommended.

1. Designation of the SPAR as a transit arterial
2. Placement of bus stops at locations with convenient pedestrian access to adjacent land uses
3. Placement of passenger shelters adjacent to all major transit destinations or potential transit destinations
4. Placement of sidewalks on both sides of the roadway
5. Providing buffer areas between the roadway and adjacent sidewalks
6. Placement of frequent, well-marked pedestrian crossings of the roadway
7. Signal timing that meets both pedestrian and automobile needs
8. A convenient location for the Issaquah Highlands park-and-ride, including bus layover space and sufficient bus bays to accommodate connecting services
9. Provision of safe and convenient pedestrian access between all sidewalks and adjacent land uses

5.2.2 Recommended Front Street Corridor Improvements

Front Street, while constituting a major transit corridor in the City of Issaquah is also characterized as having frequent congestion from automobile traffic. In addition to the designation of Front Street as a transit arterial, the following transit recommendations have also been identified for Front Street:

5.2.2.1 Passenger Shelters

Despite the high volume of transit traffic along Front Street and the high visibility of the area, only one shelter is currently located along Front Street in the vicinity of downtown Issaquah. It is recommended that the City and King County Metro increase the number of passenger shelters at existing high ridership and other high-visibility locations along Front Street. Specifically, shelters and zones should be located adjacent to, and across from the Village Theater, immediately south of Dogwood, at Alder Place and at Sunset Way across from the Issaquah Library. In addition to accommodating existing riders, the shelters function as a means to increase the visibility of transit services along Front Street and to increase transit ridership along this congested corridor.

5.2.2.2 Transit Priority Treatments

Because of the congested nature of the Front Street corridor, it is also recommended to evaluate the feasibility of implementing modifications to permit the priority movement of transit vehicles through the Front Street/East Lake Sammamish Parkway corridor. Specific recommendations include:

1. Examine whether Transit Signal Priority is warranted for Front Street / East Lake Sammamish Pkwy intersections
2. Examine the feasibility of queue-jump lanes on Front Street. This would require taking on-street parking; however, it would allow buses to bypass a continually congested area, and assist in persuading King County Metro to provide more service to the Front Street area.

Figure 19
King County Metro Passenger Shelter

5.2.3 Recommended SR 900 Corridor Improvements

SR 900, from NW Sammamish Road to Newport Way is a major transit corridor. Under the definitions outlined in Section 5.1, this roadway should be classified as a Transit Arterial, although there are currently no on-street bus stops in this segment of SR 900. The following transit recommendations have been identified for this heavily-traveled bus and automobile corridor.

1. Designate SR 900 between NW Sammamish Road and Newport Way as a transit arterial
2. Ensure that the HOV lanes to be constructed along SR 900 meet the needs of public transit access and operation
3. Evaluate signals at SR 900 and Gilman, Maple, and Newport for Transit Signal Priority and equip signals as necessary.
4. Work with King County Metro, Sound Transit and the State DOT to locate bus stops in both the northbound and southbound direction on SR 900 at Gilman Boulevard in order to put stops closer to passenger destinations.

5.2.4 Recommended Gilman Boulevard Corridor Improvements

Gilman Boulevard, between Maple and Front Streets is a heavily-traveled transit corridor. This segment is characterized by a four-lane roadway with median boulevard treatment and left turn pockets at major intersections. Sidewalks exist on both sides of Gilman Boulevard in this area but pedestrian connections between the sidewalks and bus stops along the street and the storefronts of adjacent commercial properties is poor or, in some cases, non-existent.

The following transit improvements have been identified for Gilman Boulevard:

1. Designate Gilman Boulevard as a transit arterial
2. Improve the pedestrian environment by creating more frequent crosswalks, and placing bus shelters at all bus stops.
3. Improve pedestrian access from the street frontage to storefronts in adjacent commercial developments

5.2.5 Planning Relationships

It is also recommended that the transit service design impacts of other traffic and pedestrian features be included in the project evaluation process. Pedestrian bulbs, speed bumps, traffic calming, intersection (re)alignments, HOV lanes, queue bypass lanes and street parking projects all have impacts on the design and smooth operation of transit services and facilities. It is important for the City to include an assessment of these transit-related impacts in all future evaluations of these proposed actions.

5.3 Transit Service Recommendations

A number of service recommendations have been formulated to address many of the identified unmet transit needs in the City of Issaquah. These recommendations are operationally general in nature, describing the unmet need being addressed and suggesting a potential means of meeting that need. In some cases, the service recommendations are dependent upon the construction of physical facilities being completed before the service modification can be implemented.

Costs used for the transit service recommendations are based upon King County Metro marginal service costs projected for 2003. For regular buses, this cost is estimated at $ 65.57 per hour, for articulated buses at $ 71.88 per hour and for transit vans at $ 62.18 per hour. Costs are rounded to the nearest $1,000.

The recommendations have been organized to reflect the geographic service area for which service is to be improved.

5.3.1 Klahanie / Sammamish Plateau

There is a need for service between the Sammamish Plateau area and the commercial/retail areas near Costco and along Gilman Boulevard on weekends. King County Metro Route 927 provides this service between approximately 6:00 AM and 6:00 PM weekdays and from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM Saturdays. In order to better accommodate work trips in this area and to provide transit access on weekends, it is proposed to operate Route 927 until 7:00 PM weekdays and from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM on Sundays.

The approximate annual operating cost of this extension of service, which addresses transit service priority #4 identified by focus group participants, is $52,000. No additional peak hour vehicles are required.

5.3.2 Southwest Issaquah (South and West of Newport Way)

The southwest area of the City of Issaquah is characterized by circuitous and often steep roadways serving this nearly mountainous terrain. In general, this region is populated by middle-income and upper-income residents. These persons are not customarily considered a significant transit market.

The southwest Issaquah region covers a significant area, and most residences are beyond normal walking distances to any existing public transportation services. To provide this area with a level of transit service that at least meets residents' emergency needs, some level of public transit service should be available to this region on a demand-response basis. It is recommended that demand response transit service, connecting this area with other transit services at the Issaquah Park-and-Ride facility be made available.

It is recommended that service be initially implemented between 6:00 AM and 7:00 PM weekdays only. At such time as sufficient demand for weekend services to this region can be quantified, transit services could be extended to those periods as well. The estimated annual operating cost of this weekday service is $ 205,000 and will require the addition of one van-type vehicle to the in-service fleet during peak commuter hours.

This recommendation addresses, in part, transit priority #12, identified by the focus group participants.

5.3.3 Issaquah Highlands

The developmental densities planned for the Issaquah Highlands should make this region a prime market for public transit services. To accomplish the promotion of increased transit ridership in this development, a number of modifications to existing routes are recommended. Service improvements for this region include improvements to the general coverage of the City of Issaquah, including the Issaquah Highlands as well as improvements to access to transit services from this area.

5.3.3.1 Downtown Issaquah Connection

The significant short-term need from this area is a connection between the employment and commercial area to the north of Interstate-90 and downtown Issaquah. Currently, this connection is made via King County Metro Route 200 via SR 900 and the Issaquah Park-and-Ride facility. Many individuals have expressed a need for a connection between these areas that is more direct than that exhibited by the existing alignment.

5.3.3.1.1 Short-term Recommendation

In the short term, the desired connection could best be made by operating Route 200 from NE 51st Street southbound via East Lake Sammamish Parkway SE and Front Street to downtown Issaquah. This would convert Route 200 into a loop route. It is recommended that this loop be operated in both directions at a minimum of 30 minute intervals.

It is recognized that operation via East Lake Sammamish Parkway SE in the vicinity of Interstate-90 is not without a cost to schedule adherence. Significant delays occur in this area during much of the day. It is likely that the transfer connections between Route 200 and other Issaquah routes will be adversely affected. However, since Route 200 is a self-contained local shuttle route, delays would not adversely affect the schedule performance of other routes in the Issaquah area.

Currently, two vehicles are required to provide service at 30-minute intervals on route 200. It is anticipated that the extended loop service will require three vehicles to provide the same level of service. The added service results in an expenditure of approximately 2,280 annual service hours at an approximate annual cost of $149,000. One additional vehicle would be required to operate this modified alignment.

5.3.3.1.2 Mid-term Recommendation

In the mid term, additional opportunities will be available to provide the connection from the retail and commercial areas to the North of Interstate-90 with downtown Issaquah. The first phase of the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride is scheduled for completion after the opening of the SPAR connection to Interstate-90, scheduled for completion in 2003.

At that time, an alternate route for the Route 200 via the Highlands Park-and-Ride, the SPAR, Interstate-90 and East Sunset Way will be available to provide the missing service link, to provide all day service to the new park and ride and provide a link from the Issaquah Highlands to both downtown Issaquah and to the commercial retail areas to the north of Interstate-90.

It is anticipated that service via this alignment will require an additional vehicle, above that required in the short-term recommendation above, to the Route 200 schedule. It is further recommended that service via Route 200 be increased to 6 days per week at the time of completion of the SPAR connection and the Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride. The estimated annual operating cost of the additional weekday service is $149,000 and the added Saturday service, approximately $164,000.

There is also the potential of providing service to the Highlands area via Routes 269 and 927.

5.3.3.2 Residential Circulator

It is also recommended that there be provided regular transit service between the residential areas of the Issaquah Highlands and the Highlands Park-and-Ride facility during all hours of express transit service to and from that facility. It is left to King County Metro to determine how to best provide that connection.

For discussion purposes, it is assumed that such service may require the operation of an additional vehicle from 5 AM to 8 PM weekdays and from 7 AM to 7 PM Saturdays at an approximate annual cost of $275,000. Given the nature of the service area, it is likely that this service will be operated with a van-type vehicle that may also be available to provide service to other areas as well during its hours of operation.

There is also an opportunity to work with the developer to provide some of this needed service. Other approaches could include Flex Car, rideshare and VanShare options.

This recommendation addresses transit priorities #2, #3 and #12 mentioned by focus group participants and summarized in Section 2.3.3.8 on page 16.

5.3.4 Talus

Service needs to be provided to the Talus urban village at the time at which development warrants the implementation of such service. Neither King County Metro nor Sound Transit have pledged service to this area.

Several approaches to the provision of such services have been evaluated. Briefly, those approaches were:

1 Add a minimum of three AM trips from Talus to downtown Seattle and 3 PM trips into Talus from downtown Seattle via the Issaquah Park-and-Ride facility weekdays. Cost: 2 weekday peak vehicles and approximately $141,000 in annual operating costs.)
2 Extend Route 209 from the Issaquah Park-and-Ride into the Talus development on weekday off-peak hours. This would provide hourly local service from Talus to the Issaquah Park-and-Ride facility and downtown Issaquah between 9:30 AM and 7:30 PM weekdays and Saturdays. The short extension might be possible within the existing 209 schedule. (Cost: no vehicles, some minimal mileage-related cost. No increase in service hours is required.)
3 Currently, nine daily morning trips to downtown Seattle and eight daily afternoon trips from downtown Seattle via Route 214 start and end in downtown Issaquah

in addition to the Route 214 trips passing through downtown Issaquah enroute to and from North Bend. Any or all of these seventeen daily directional trips could be rescheduled to begin and end at Talus, thereby providing peak hour service to this development at little or no cost while maintaining commuter service capacity to and from the Issaquah Park-and-Ride facility.

It is recommended that a combination of approaches 2) and 3) above be adopted to provide service to Talus when developmental densities dictate the need to implement services to this area. The additional cost of providing service via these methods is negligible, although some peak service to downtown Issaquah via Route 214 will be lost.

Service Area	Route	Description	Span	Change in Annual Cost	Addresses Transit Priority # Focus group (P. 16-17)	Change in Vehicle Requirements (peak)
Klahanie/Sammamish Plateau	927	Extend service until 7:00 PM weekdays and add service from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM Sundays	6:00 AM to 7:00 PM weekdays 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM Saturdays and Sundays	$ 52,000	3, 4, 12	0
Southwest Issaquah	New	Implement new demand response service.	6:00 AM to 7:00 PM weekdays only	$ 205,000	2, 12	+1
Issaquah Highlands	200	Operate loop via E Lk. Sammamish Pkwy. to downtown Issaquah (short term)	6:00 AM to 7:00 PM weekdays only	$ 149,000	2, 3, 4, 12	+1
	200	Extend loop via Black Nugget, SPAR and Interstate-90 to downtown Issaquah (longer-term)	6:00 AM to 7:00 PM weekdays	$ 149,000	3, 4	+1
	200	Add loop service via Black Nugget, SPAR and Interstate-90 to downtown Issaquah on Saturdays (longer-term)	7:00 AM to 7:00 PM Saturdays	$ 164,000	3, 4	0
Talus	214	Move several 214 trips originating in downtown Issaquah to Talus	6:00 AM to 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM weekdays	$ -	12	0
	209	Extend from Issaquah Park-and-Ride to Talus	9:30 AM to 7:30 PM weekdays and Saturdays	$ -	12	0

Table G
Summary of Issaquah Service Modification Recommendations

5.3.5 Project Updates

It is recommended that the City of Issaquah periodically update this transit needs analysis. As conditions change in the Issaquah region, and as recommended changes are implemented, the results of these changes should be monitored to verify the needs and recommendations of this study. While no specific time period is recommended for modifications, the need for such a project update should be evaluated at least every four to five years.

5.4 Transit Facility Recommendations

In addition to the recommended changes in transit service, the evaluation of transit facilities summarized in Section 4.2 has suggested the need for additional passenger facilities in the City of Issaquah to support the recommended service modifications.

5.4.1 Park and Ride Facilities

The existing Issaquah Park and Ride lot, and the companion Tibbets Creek facility located across the street, are operating at or above their design capacities. The survey of Issaquah Park-and-Ride patrons revealed that as many as one-sixth of users are forced to use another park-and-ride facility at least once a week because the Issaquah facility had no available parking.

It is recommended that King County Metro and Sound Transit work together to identify a location for another park-and-ride facility, located to serve the greater Issaquah community, that will provide additional capacity for intending users.

Figure 20
Park and Ride Lot

The planned Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride is planned for an initial capacity of approximately 500 stalls, but has an ultimate design capacity of close to 1,000 stalls. Currently, there are commitments to construct only the 500 stalls in the first phase of development.

It is likely that the SPAR connection to Interstate-90 will reach congested status soon after it is opened in 2003. This condition may accelerate the growth in demand for additional park-and-ride capacity at the Highlands facility. It is recommended that this facility be closely monitored and that plans be made for the timely expansion of the

Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride as soon as demand demonstrates the need for additional capacity.

While temporary facilities can help alleviate the short-term overcrowding at existing facilities, utilization of such facilities has been relatively low in the past. In order to generate significant utilization, the lots need to have high levels of service during periods of peak demand and midday service to allow users to return to their vehicles in case of emergency. Facilities that do not possess these attributes have proven to be of marginal value in reducing overcrowding at major park-and-ride lots.

5.4.2 Transit Center

The site selection process for a new Issaquah Transit Center is already under way. A number of potential sites are being evaluated for the location of this facility. It is recommended that the City of Issaquah take an active role in this site selection process.

It is likely that there will be some support for locating this facility at or adjacent to the existing Issaquah Park-and-Ride facility. While this location certainly is located at the confluence of a number of King County Metro and Sound Transit routes, the existing park-and-ride facility currently provides transit center functions at this location.

The same conditions will ultimately exist at the new Issaquah Highlands Park-and-Ride lot. There is little need to locate a transfer center facility adjacent to, or in, a park-and-ride lot because the lot can easily accommodate the transfer center functions by itself.

Figure 21
Aurora Village Transit Center

It is recommended that the City of Issaquah carefully evaluate the potential benefits of locating the proposed transit center in or near the Issaquah CBD. This location is already the nexus of transit service in the City and sits at the crossroads of a number of existing transit routes: 200, 209, 214, 269 and 927.

Because of the crowded traffic conditions along Front Street in this area, the promotion of increased used of public transit is in the best interests of the City of Issaquah and its citizens. The Issaquah Transit Center, located in the neighborhood of downtown Issaquah, can be a very powerful and visible marketing tool to attract new transit riders.

5.4.3 Passenger Shelters

As noted previously, there are just eight passenger shelters in the City of Issaquah, including two at the Issaquah Park and Ride lot. Since riders unfailingly list passenger shelters as extremely important to their decision to ride transit, it is recommended that the City of Issaquah embark upon a program of installing a number of additional passenger shelters throughout the City.

In some cases, these may be constructed in concert with King County Metro's own passenger shelter program. However, criteria for locating those shelters is based almost entirely upon average daily boardings at candidate bus stops. In this, the City of Issaquah will be in competition with other jurisdictions throughout King County for the limited number of shelters sited each year.

Therefore, it is recommended that the City investigate embarking upon its own program of locating shelters at strategic bus stops throughout the City, much as the City of Bellevue did as part of the widening of Northeast 8th Street several years ago. Such a program will involve locating shelters based upon different criteria.

5.4.3.1 High Ridership Stops

Ultimately, shelters should be located at all bus stops exhibiting 20 or more daily boardings. Based upon the ridership criteria, three additional shelters should be sited at the following locations:

4 Northbound on Front Street at 170 Front Street North (33 daily boardings)
5 Southbound on 12th Avenue NW at Newport Way NW (30 daily boardings)
6 Eastbound on NW Maple Street at 12th Avenue NW (20 daily boardings)

5.4.3.2 Stops with a Higher Potential for Ridership

A number of other locations, which currently do not meet the ridership threshold for passenger shelter location have been identified. These stops are located adjacent to major employers or other trip attractors and should generate a much higher level of daily transit boardings than is currently the case. The location of shelters at these locations will provide a highly visible reminder of the availability of transit service and should promote higher use of transit services:

15 Adjacent to, and across the street from, the Village Theater on Front Street
16 At Front Street and Alder Place
17 At Front Street and Sunset Way, east of the Issaquah Library
18 At Issaquah City Hall, westbound on Sunset Way
19 On Black Nugget Road immediately north of Issaquah-Fall City Road
20 Westbound on SE 51st Street just west of East Lake Sammamish Parkway SE, adjacent to the entrance to the Siemens Company facility (See ***Figure 22***)
21 At SE 51st Street and 220th Avenue SE adjacent to Sammamish Park Place
22 On 220th Avenue SE adjacent to the District Court building
23 Eastbound and westbound on 10th Avenue NW adjacent to Costco and the Pickering Farms Barn
24 On Lake Drive adjacent to Costco store (there appears to be insufficient space to locate a shelter adjacent to the Costco Headquarters Building)
25 On 12th Avenue NW at across from Issaquah City Hall Northwest
26 At the corner of SR 900 and Gilman

Figure 22
Entrance to Siemens Corp on SE 51st St.

Boulevard NW (no bus stop exists currently at this location)

27 On Newport Way adjacent to the King County Library Center (no bus stops exist next to this location in either direction, despite the fact that more than 250 persons are employed at this site (see Table C, page 11.)

28 On Gilman Boulevard and 7th Avenue NW

Figure 23
Issaquah City Hall Street Frontage

Significant effort should be made to locate a bus stop and shelter adjacent to the Costco Headquarters Building (see site 10, above) as a means of promoting additional transit use at this location. This location would probably require placing the shelter and pad on private property set back from, and adjacent to, the existing sidewalk. Such placement would require the approval of Costco corporate management.

The Issaquah City Hall on Sunset Way (site 4, see ***Figure 23***, left) is built out to the street, such that there is little room to locate a street side shelter at this location. If the City wishes to position itself as a promoter of increased transit ridership, development of a passenger shelter at this location would be a significant step in demonstrating that commitment. Currently no bus stop exists on Sunset adjacent to City Hall, although there is curb parking at this location that could be rededicated to transit use. A stop and shelter are located across Sunset Way from City Hall.

5.5 Marketing

While the primary responsibility for marketing transit services resides with King County Metro and with Sound Transit, it is recommended that the City of Issaquah take a more aggressive position in marketing available transit services to its citizens.

The City should actively pursue means to help develop public/private partnerships with major employers and retailers to promote bus ridership and to identify additional incentives for landowners and developers to provide transit-related facilities in their developments.

It is recommended that the City investigate the production of a City of Issaquah Transit map, similar to the one prepared by the City of Bellevue, which shows all of the transit services available within the City, irrespective of the system providing that service. Such a publication could also list all monthly pass outlets, fare schedules, major points of interest and the routes that serve them and transit information numbers and web addresses.

Working with the two transit agencies, information kiosks should be located at additional locations throughout the City, providing information on route alignments, schedules, fare structure and schedules. Outlets for monthly passes and system maps should also be established within the City and in the absence of other locations, monthly passes

should be made available at the two City Hall locations.

5.6 Summary

The transit service provided to the City of Issaquah and its environs is not in proportion to the population of the region. Only one route provides service to this entire area on Sunday and service in the weekend and evening periods is inadequate to serve the growing population and employment of the region.

A number of specific transportation service and facility shortcomings have been addressed in this project, including:

1. Overcrowded park-and-ride facilities often force residents to drive several miles to access other park-and-ride facilities in Bellevue and Mercer Island
2. Inadequate internal transit circulation within the City of Issaquah, with few north-south connections east of SR 900
3. Inadequate transit access from several City neighborhoods to the commercial/retail area north of Interstate-90
4. Several growing neighborhoods, such as Issaquah Highlands, have no existing access to transit services
5. Moderate to severe traffic congestion occurs along several streets and roadways within the City of Issaquah
6. A relative lack of transit passenger amenities exists, such as shelters and benches
7. Pedestrian access is inadequate between sidewalks / bus stops and commercial, retail and employment building entrances
8. There are few direct transit links with communities other than downtown Seattle and downtown Bellevue

New roadway construction is likely to result in new roadways operating at near-capacity almost from their inception. It is in the interest of the City of Issaquah to promote the use of public transportation as a means of alleviating severe vehicular congestion on City streets and roads.

The recommendations of this project have included improvements to the roadway infrastructure to promote the use of these corridors by pedestrians and transit vehicles. These recommendations have included:

- Placement of bus stops and passenger shelters at high-volume and strategically-located transit access points, providing shelter for existing users and promoting transit use among non-riders

1. Ensuring that high-occupancy vehicle enhancements meet the needs of public transit as well as of private vehicles
2. Ensuring that sufficient right-of-way is reserved for transit use
3. Evaluating the efficiencies that might result from the implementation of transit-priority treatments such as bus lanes, traffic signal pre-emption and queue-jump lanes
4. Adopting policies which apply transit use classifications to City streets and roads, thereby reserving rights-of-way for future transit uses and facilities
5. Taking a more aggressive stance in the marketing of transit services to Issaquah residents, employees and visitors

A number of specific transit service-related recommendations have also been proposed, including:

1. Modifying Route 200 into a loop route providing a more direct connection between the employment and commercial areas to the north of Interstate-90 and downtown Issaquah
2. Extension of existing services to the Sammamish Plateau later in the day and on Sundays
3. Adding demand response "lifeline" services into the hilly terrain of southeast Issaquah which is very difficult to serve by traditional fixed route transit
4. Planning park-and-ride and local transit services to serve the developing Issaquah Highlands and Talus urban village areas

The City of Issaquah needs to make public transit a priority in future street and roadway as well as land use planning. The recommendations of this study include the development of a transit-focused approach to future development in the Issaquah region.

Appendix A
Legal Basis for the Provision of Transit Services

To provide background information concerning the provision of public transit service in King County and the identification of legal and legislative options that may be available to the City of Issaquah for establishing local transit service.

A.1 Overview

Current law regarding public transit: public transit service authority in Washington State is identified within the Revised Code of Washington (RCW)

- 35.58, Metropolitan Municipal Corporation (and Chapter 36.56 RCW Metropolitan Municipal Corp Functions, etc. – Assumption by Counties;
- 36.57, Countywide Transportation Authority; and
- 36.57A, Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA)

From a historical perspective, cities that were operating municipal transit systems before the mid-1970's, when PTBA, countywide, and metropolitan municipal authority statues were established for transportation districts, could continue to operate their own transit systems. Today the cities of Everett, Yakima and Pullman still provide transit service within their own jurisdictions.

The statutes that provide authority for public transit to operate under also confer very broad powers on the agencies that provide the service and at the same time limit the authority of local jurisdictions to do anything on their own. For example:

A.1.1 RCW 35.58.250, Other local public passenger transportation service prohibited -- Agreements -- Purchase -- Condemnation.

> *"…no person or private corporation shall operate a local public passenger transportation service within the metropolitan area with the exception of taxis, buses owned or operated by a school district or private school, and buses owned or operated by any corporation or organization solely for the purpose of the corporation or organization…" (see Attachment A, for complete language).*

A.1.2 RCW 35.58.260, Transportation function -- Acquisition of city system.

> *"If a metropolitan municipal corporation shall be authorized to perform the metropolitan transportation function, it shall, upon the effective date of the assumption of such power, have and exercise all rights with respect to the construction, acquisition, maintenance, operation, extension, alteration, repair, control and management of passenger transportation which any component city shall have been previously empowered to exercise and such powers shall not thereafter be exercised by such component cities without the consent of the metropolitan municipal corporation..."*

A.1.3 RCW 36.57.080, Transfer of transportation powers and rights to authority -- Funds -- Contract indebtedness.

> *"…authority [Countywide Transportation Authority] shall have and exercise all rights with respect to the construction, acquisition, maintenance, operation, extension, alteration, repair, control and management of passenger transportation which the county or any city located within such county shall have been previously empowered to exercise and such powers shall not thereafter be exercised by the county or such cities without the consent of the authority."*

In the case of King County, King County Metro Transit (aka, "KCM") falls within the provisions of both a Metropolitan Corporation and a Countywide Transportation Authority. Therefore, individual jurisdictional efforts (within King County) to provide transit service outside the norm of the County Transportation Authority approval and/or participation would be hard pressed to do so.

There are however, a number of other statutes that also identify requirements that a public transit authority should be participating in and may provide an impetus for requiring additional levels of transit service within a local jurisdiction (KCM service within Issaquah). This includes the following laws:

A.1.4 The Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A)

The GMA requires all cities and counties in the state to do some planning. It has more extensive requirements for the largest and fastest-growing counties and cities in the state but its requirements include "guaranteeing" the consistency of transportation and capital facilities plans with land use plans. Therefore, one finds further requirements for public transit systems under the GMA with regard to comprehensive transportation plans and concurrency.

On one hand the intent of the Act establishes expectations that certain cities will be centers for population, employment and density but on the other hand it does little to address transit linkages in order to carry out and enhance those objectives. The tendency is that while cities are expected to meet the requirements of the GMA many, for planning purposes, identify concentrated level of transit service within their urban centers yet lack the tools to actually link land-use and transit or the authority to initiate their own supplemental transit options. In short, the effort in providing adequate planning tools under the Growth Management Act's concurrency efforts really does take a concerted effort between a local jurisdiction and the transit authority. This effort utilizes the political arena of oversight committees and public process to call attention to perceived or real inadequacies of current transit conditions.

A.1.5 The Washington Clean Air Act (RCW 70.94)

Under this Act, transit and other "transportation alternatives" are specifically identified to help mitigate the effects of automotive traffic in Washington's metropolitan areas, which are found to be a major source of emissions of air contaminants that contribute a significant share to pollution in the region. Under the numerous chapters of the Act's requirements, the Transportation Demand Management and Commute Trip Reduction program (70.94.521) requires:

> *"…local governments in those counties experiencing the greatest automobile-related air pollution and traffic congestion to develop and implement plans to reduce single-occupant vehicle commute trips. Such plans shall require major employers and employers at major worksites to implement programs to reduce single-occupant vehicle commuting by employees at major worksites."*

In addition, requirements under this chapter for counties and cities include,

> *"…commute trip reduction plans adopted by counties, cities, and towns under this chapter shall be consistent with and may be incorporated in applicable state or regional transportation plans and local comprehensive plans and shall be coordinated, and consistent with, the commute trip reduction plans of counties, cities, or towns with which the county, city, or town has, in part, common borders or related regional issues. Such regional issues shall include assuring consistency in the treatment of employers who have worksites subject to the requirements of this chapter in more than one jurisdiction. Counties, cities, or towns adopting commute trip reduction plans may enter into agreements through the interlocal cooperation act or by resolution or ordinance as appropriate with other jurisdictions, local transit agencies, or regional transportation planning organizations to coordinate the development and implementation of such plans. Transit agencies shall work with counties, cities, and towns to take into account the location of major employer worksites when planning transit service changes or the expansion of public transportation services. Counties, cities, or towns adopting a commute trip reduction plan shall review it annually and revise it as necessary to be consistent with applicable plans developed under RCW 36.70A.070 (GMA)."*

King County is one of 9 counties that are currently affected by the Clean Air Act. KCM has developed an extensive array of services under the TDM and CTR banner as has the Economic Development Council of Seattle and King County, which Issaquah is a member of, with its own "Commuter Challenge" organization. Both agencies have initiated and continue to maintain efforts that incorporate commuter alternatives via transit, carpools, vanpools, parking management, ride matching, tax incentives and other supporting efforts to help reduce commute trips and traffic congestion.

In general terms, efforts made under the Growth Management and Clean Air Acts do not provide nor direct local transit agencies to meet specific conditions required of jurisdictions. While transit obviously plays a significant role in these efforts the fact remains that the burden is on local government. Any inter-local cooperative efforts and agreements that can be developed to assist in these endeavors however may be able to provide additional groundwork for future transportation efforts.

A.2 What Does the Future Hold?

It is a bit early to venture a guess as to what may come of the concerns expressed about KCM by a number of King County jurisdictions to state legislators over the past few years.

As many know, the City of Kent has taken an active role in pursuing various courses of action to allow them to deal specifically with transit service provided within their community. Over the past couple of years, Representatives Geoff Simpson, 47th District, and Karen Keiser, 33rd District, have taken active roles in pursing a "local option" bill for supplemental transit service. At the end of 2000, there were efforts to consider a statutory addition that would provide cities with authority and revenue options to supplement transit service as may be needed in a downtown, neighborhood or industrial district. The idea was to provide a level of "feeder service" a regional provider (like KCM) is not equipped or financed to do.

In pursing this course of action the Legislature passed an amendment in the transportation appropriation for 2001 – 2003 adopting Section 205 (6) for the Legislative Transportation Committee (LTC) to:

> *(6) The legislative transportation committee, in cooperation with an area wide transportation system or systems, shall undertake an evaluation of providing locally sponsored transit services in a local community supplemental to those services provided by an area wide system. The evaluation shall address:*
> *(a) The costs and benefits of providing such services;*
> *(b) The impact of such service on ridership on the area wide system and on any regional systems;*
> *(c) Funding options for supplemental services; and*
> *(d) Institutional arrangements affecting the institution of supplemental services.*
>
> *The committee shall work with the department of transportation, area wide transit providers, community officials, private businesses, labor organizations, and others as appropriate in conducting the evaluation, and in developing a pilot project if feasible. The committee shall provide an interim progress report to the legislature by January 2002. The committee shall report its findings to the legislature not later than December 1, 2002.*

In January 2002, the interim report simply highlighted the current efforts underway. Work on the study is still ongoing and preliminary findings are not expected until fall of this year.

A.3 Legislation

RCW 35.58.250
Other local public passenger transportation service prohibited -- Agreements -- Purchase -- Condemnation.

Except in accordance with an agreement made as provided herein, upon the effective date on which the metropolitan municipal corporation commences to perform the metropolitan transportation function, no person or private corporation shall operate a local public passenger transportation service within the metropolitan area with the exception of taxis, busses owned or operated by a school district or private school, and busses owned or operated by any corporation or organization solely for the purposes of the corporation or organization and for the use of which no fee or fare is charged.

An agreement may be entered into between the metropolitan municipal corporation and any person or corporation legally operating a local public passenger transportation service wholly within or partly within and partly without the metropolitan area and on said effective date under which such person or corporation may continue to operate such service or any part thereof for such time and upon such terms and conditions as provided in such agreement. Where any such local public passenger transportation service will be required to cease to operate within the metropolitan area, the commission may agree with the owner of such service to purchase the assets used in providing such service, or if no agreement can be reached, the commission shall condemn such assets in the manner provided herein for the condemnation of other properties.

Wherever a privately owned public carrier operates wholly or partly within a metropolitan municipal corporation, the Washington utilities and transportation commission shall continue to exercise jurisdiction over such operation as provided by law.

[1965 c 7 § 35.58.250. Prior: 1957 c 213 § 25.]

RCW 35.58.260
Transportation function -- Acquisition of city system.

If a metropolitan municipal corporation shall be authorized to perform the metropolitan transportation function, it shall, upon the effective date of the assumption of such power, have and exercise all rights with respect to the construction, acquisition, maintenance, operation, extension, alteration, repair, control and management of passenger transportation which any component city shall have been previously empowered to exercise and such powers shall not thereafter be exercised by such component cities without the consent of the metropolitan municipal corporation: PROVIDED, That any city owning and operating a public transportation system on such effective date may continue to operate such system within such city until such system shall have been

acquired by the metropolitan municipal corporation and a metropolitan municipal corporation may not acquire such system without the consent of the city council of such city.

[1965 c 7 § 35.58.260. Prior: 1957 c 213 § 26.]

RCW 35.58.272
Public transportation systems -- Definitions.

"Municipality" as used in RCW 35.58.272 through 35.58.279, as now or hereafter amended, and in RCW 36.57.080, 36.57.100, 36.57.110, 35.58.2721, 35.58.2794, and chapter 36.57A RCW, means any metropolitan municipal corporation which shall have been authorized to perform the function of metropolitan public transportation; any county performing the public transportation function as authorized by RCW 36.57.100 and 36.57.110 or which has established a county transportation authority pursuant to chapter 36.57 RCW; any public transportation benefit area established pursuant to chapter 36.57A RCW; and any city, which is not located within the boundaries of a metropolitan municipal corporation, county transportation authority, or public transportation benefit area, and which owns, operates or contracts for the services of a publicly owned or operated system of transportation: PROVIDED, That the term "municipality" shall mean in respect to any county performing the public transportation function pursuant to RCW 36.57.100 and 36.57.110 only that portion of the unincorporated area lying wholly within such unincorporated transportation benefit area.

"Motor vehicle" as used in RCW 35.58.272 through 35.58.279, as now or hereafter amended, shall have the same meaning as in RCW 82.44.010.

"County auditor" shall mean the county auditor of any county or any person designated to perform the duties of a county auditor pursuant to RCW 82.44.140.

"Person" shall mean any individual, corporation, firm, association or other form of business association.

[1975 1st ex.s. c 270 § 1; 1969 ex.s. c 255 § 7.]

NOTES:

Severability -- 1975 1st ex.s. c 270: "If any provision of this 1975 amendatory act, or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act, or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1975 1st ex.s. c 270 § 30.]

Effective date -- 1975 1st ex.s. c 270: "This 1975 amendatory act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, the support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect July 1, 1975." [1975 1st ex.s. c 270 § 31.]

Construction -- 1969 ex.s. c 255: "The powers and authority conferred upon municipalities under the provisions of this 1969 act shall be in addition to and supplemental to powers or authority conferred by any other law, and nothing contained herein limits any other power or authority of such municipalities." [1969 ex.s. c 255 § 21.]

Severability -- 1969 ex.s. c 255: "If any provision of this 1969 act, or its application to any municipality, person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of this 1969 act or the application of the provisions to other municipalities, persons or circumstances is not affected." [1969 ex.s. c 255 § 22.]

Contracts between political subdivisions for services and use of public transportation systems: RCW 39.33.050.

Chapter 39.33 RCW
INTERGOVERNMENTAL DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY
RCW 39.33.050, Public mass transportation systems -- Contracts for services or use.

The legislative body of any municipal corporation, quasi municipal corporation or political subdivision of the state of Washington authorized to develop and operate a public mass transportation system shall have power to contract with the legislative body of any other municipal corporation, quasi municipal corporation or political subdivision of the state of Washington, or with any person, firm or corporation for public transportation services or for the use of all or any part of any publicly owned transportation facilities for such period and under such terms and conditions and upon such rentals, fees and charges as the legislative body operating such public transportation system may determine, and may pledge all or any portion of such rentals, fees and charges and all other revenue derived from the ownership or operation of publicly owned transportation facilities to pay and to secure the payment of general obligation bonds and/or revenue bonds of such municipality issued for the purpose of acquiring or constructing a public mass transportation system.

[1969 ex.s. c 255 § 16.]

NOTES:

Construction -- Severability -- 1969 ex.s. c 255: See notes following RCW 35.58.272.

Public transportation systems: RCW 35.58.272 through 35.58.2792.

Appendix B

City of Issaquah
Transit Needs Assessment
Small Group Discussion: March 14, 2001

Discussion Guide

I. Introduction
   A. Opening remarks - CB
   B. Name, occupation, association with city of Issaquah area (if resident, number of years living here)
   C. How many here have used a city bus in or out of Issaquah in the past three months?

II. When you think about public transit services for the City of Issaquah, what do you see as the benefits from having a good bus system serving this area?

III. Why do you think people are using the bus system now?

IV. What do you think is keeping people away from using a bus?

V. Thinking about the current bus system serving the city, what do you think is working well? What is right about the system?

VI. If you could envision public transit serving Issaquah where it would be providing all of the benefits you have listed, what kinds of improvements or changes would you want to see made? (MAKE A LIST)
   A. (If not introduced, ask about) Routes
   B. Schedules
   C. Bus stop locations
   D. Bus comfort
   E. Transit incentives

V. (Ask if not introduced) I would like your responses to a few other ideas.
   A. Is the current park-and-ride working well? Are more park-and-ride spaces needed?
   B. Is there a specific route(s) that is missing that you believe people would ride?
   C. Is the free Downtown shuttle a good use of public funds?

VII. What would be effective ways that King County Metro could market transit use to the citizens of Issaquah?

VIII. Priorities: You have 5 dots each. Please take a break and come up and mark the five improvements that you believe are most needed in the current transit system.
   A. Share responses.
   B. What needs to happen first?

VII. Conclusion: If you were the head of King County Metro and you had the power, money and authority to make three changes to improve transit service for Issaquah, what would you do? (Go around table and share)